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ABSTRACT

Describing the activities and responses of American Indian women attending the 1975 Southwest Indian Women's Conference in Window Rock, Arizona, these proceedings present the following: (1) the keynote address (focus is on program funding and Indian female civil rights, self-concept, and cultural background); (2) observations derived from interviews of 20 conference participants; (3) a description of participant characteristics (most were traditional homemakers and about 66% were Navajo); (4) the basic attitudes of educated Indian women re: special problems of being a woman, the women's liberation movement; and expanding the role of Indian women; (5) recommendations coming out of the sever workshops (Funding and Resources; Legal and Jurisdictional Issues; Self-Identity; Special Problems of Aged Indian Women; Special Needs for Handicapped Indian Women; Relationship between Tribal, State, and Federal Governments; and Navajo Speaking Groups); (6) an evaluation (criticism of participants' contrasting expectations, the conference format, conference facilities, and unequal tribal representation); (7) speeches on: the problems of Indian women; the need for Indian women to work; the special problems of Indian women in the Southwest; the employment status of Indian women; the Phoenix Indian women; and a counseling center for women. (JC)

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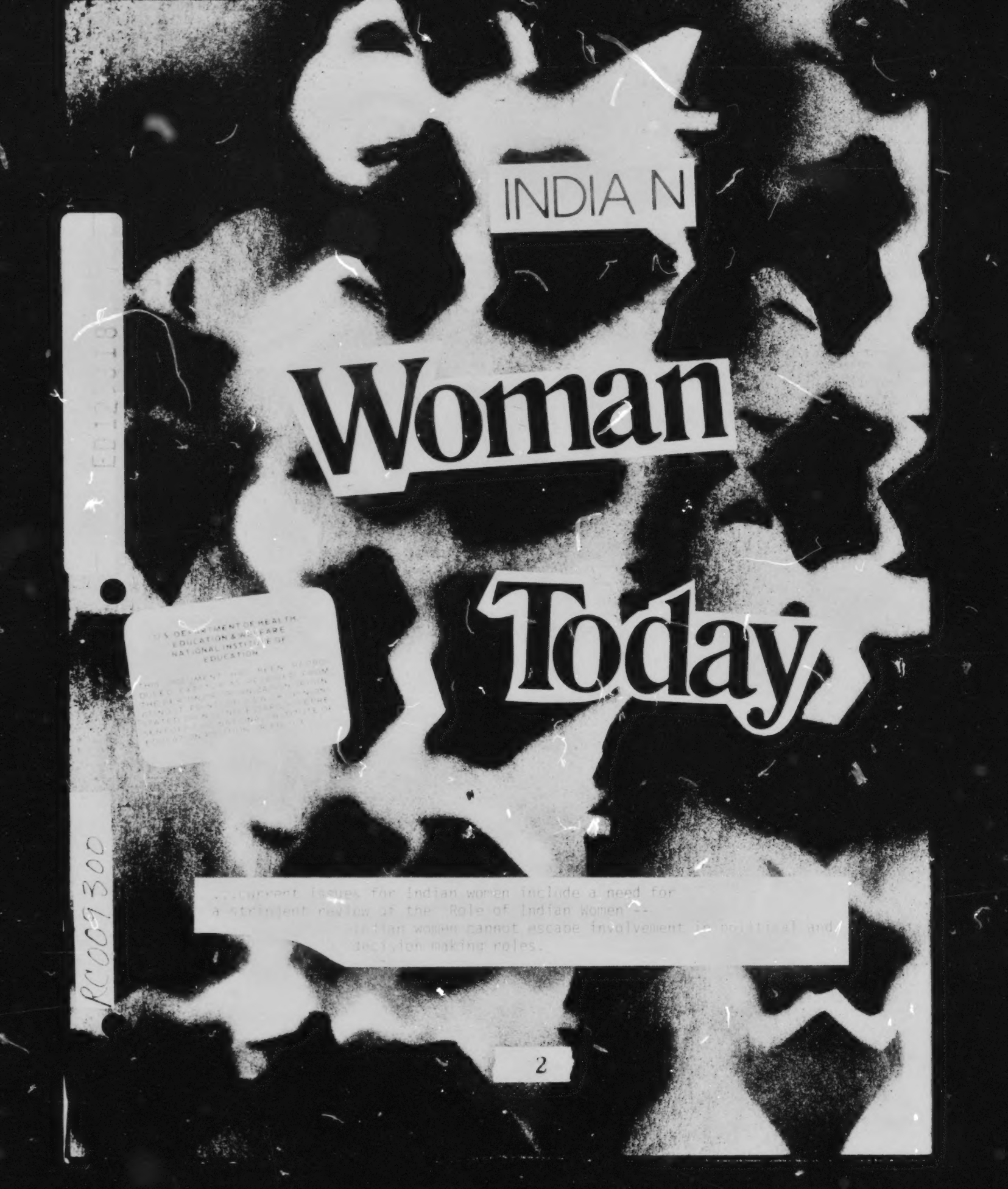
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Woman
Today
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH EDUCATION & WELFARE NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
...current issues for Indian women include a need for a stringent review of the Role of Indian women...
...Indian women cannot escape involvement in political and decision making roles.
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...UNTIL WE ORGANIZE FOR POLITICAL ACTION, ONE MAJOR RIVER OF WEALTH AND POSITION IS CLOSED TO US..." Ethelou Yazzie.

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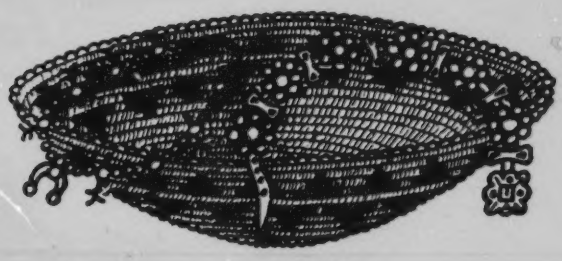
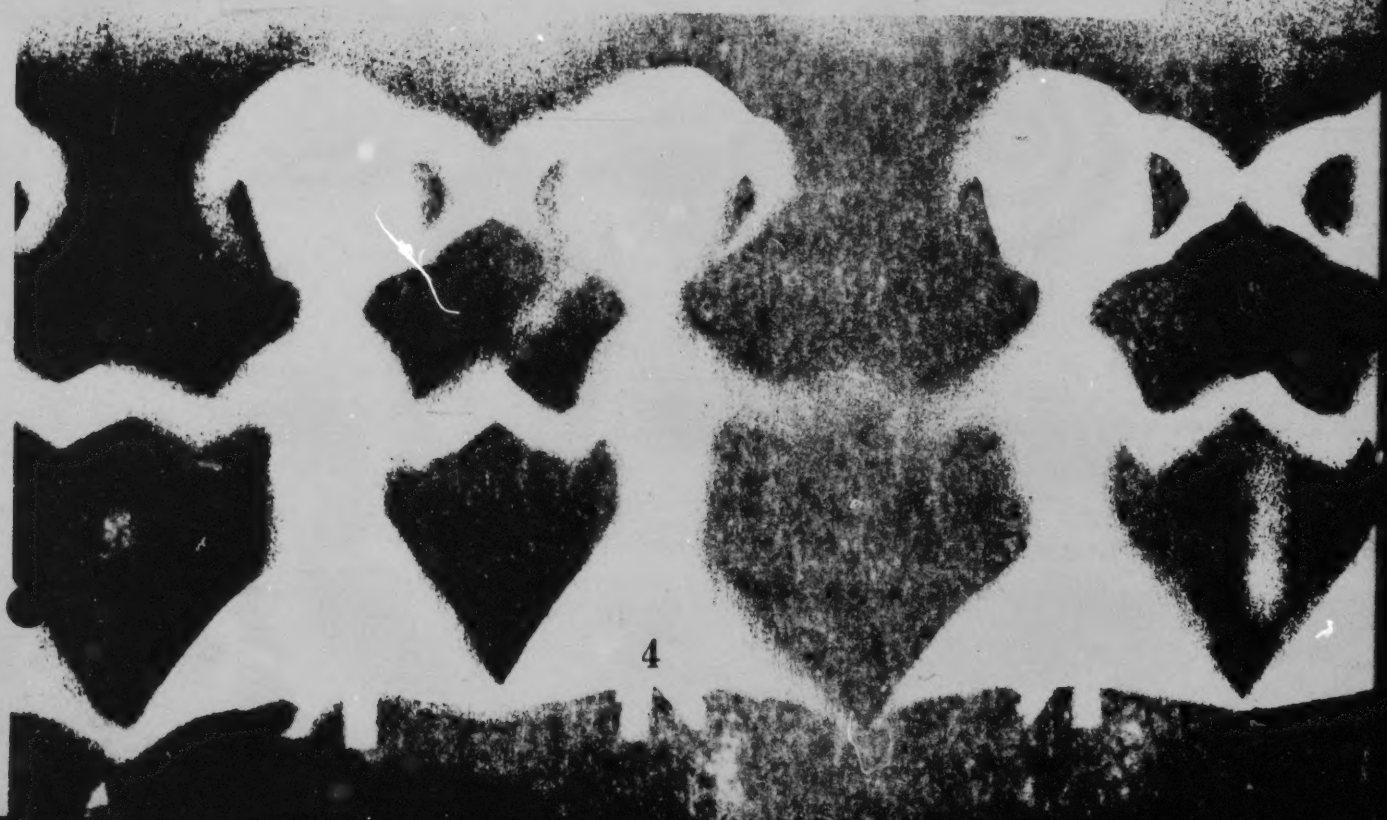
SOUTHWEST INDIAN WOMEN'S CONFERENCE
NAVAJO CIVIC CENTER
WINDOW ROCK, ARIZONA.
SEPTEMBER 24-25, 1975.



"We cannot afford to sit with arms folded and wait for the responsibility to be delivered to us; we must develop strategies designed NOT TO replace men but to work on equal basis with them. This means Indian women must strive to reach decision-making positions and share responsibilities and duties on an equal basis with men."

and,

"We must strive to secure the committment and understanding of men that women are assets in making decisions regarding the social needs of children and families because they are close to them, and that we can help to structure programs which are effective."



The Southwest Indian Women's Conference, initiated by Dr. Annie D. Wauneka, a member of the International Women's Year 1975, was held in Window Rock, Arizona, September 24 and 25, 1975, in the capitol of the Navajo Nation. This conference was held as part of the Commission on International Women's Year activities, giving voice to the unique crises facing all minority women, especially Indian women. To follow up with the broad intent of the Commission, Dr. Wauneka encouraged the creation of the Southwest Indian Women's Conference to cover the more specific areas of concern:

1. Kinds of funds and monies available for use by women, and, in particular, funds which would benefit Indian women directly;

2. kinds of criminal and civil laws which do or do not protect women in employment, education, community participation, home and other domestic matters;

3. how Indian women view themselves in light of their past Indian heritage, current events and future requirements.

Igniting the conference with her inspiring keynote speech, Dr. Wauneka said:

The keynote address was the highlight of the day. It set the tone and mood for Indian women to go to work and to enumerate their worries and their problems. Most of the women articulated their most basic survival needs in the workshops on the second day of the conference. In voicing these needs, Dr. Wauneka said:

> "For the Navajo area, lack of funds for decent houses is terrible . . . you talk about housewives, here we have shackwives. A few women in critical decision-making capacities may help come up with a better system to help those people who still are living in tarpaper-covered shacks."

Dr. Wauneka went on to say that Indian women must have access to employment, training, education and the political processes if they are to contribute fully and responsibly to the life of their Indian tribes, the Indian community, and Indian families.

A prominent Indian educator, Ethelou Yazzie, Director of the Rough Rock Demonstration School, Rough Rock, Arizona, said:

> "Priority efforts in many of our families are concentrated on food, housing, transportation, medical care. There is no energy or money -- or understanding -- left over for the routine educational needs of our girl children -- things many American girls take for granted."

Further discussing the employment field and how it affects Indian women, Mrs. Ellouise de Groat, Navajo, Director of the Mental Health Services, Navajo IHS, said,

> "Nine-tenths of the women who work need money. Most of them as heads of households or whose husbands earn less than $7,000 a year, need money desperately."

She went on to say:

> "In 1971, the average woman made only 3/4 as much money as the average man -- often while doing the same job." and "Women with a lot of drive, with strong egos, were the exception. For most, because of discrimination in employment practices, because of poor job training, because of early female conditioning, women were on the bottom of the labor ladder, and minority women were the very lowest."

During the course of the conference other women discussed the special needs of women going beyond the basic survival needs. Ethelou Yazzie, in her speech on opening day, said:

> There are blocks to our progress that must be torn down. One of the first blocks is the way we look at, and judge, one another. We must trust that our sister knows her own way, and we must not judge her as she walks towards her own goal."

and,

> "In the rearing of our infants and in the education of our women, we need all the help we can get. And most of the help must come from each other. There is no room for destructive gossip and backbiting, because we are all in this together. Together we can change the world. Alone we will disintergrate into the worst aspects of the world we wish to change."

Eva Benally, Navajo, Director of the Navajo Community College, Shiprock, New Mexico branch, asked the women's support of the Shiprock women's efforts to establish a day care center, as one solution to the "working mother's dilemma."

Nancy Evans, co-chairwoman of the conference, said that she, as one of the leading forces behind the conference, hoped this conference would give impetus to a fuller and wider dialogue amongst Indian women about the special problems afflicting them. . . . "We have to start somewhere."

"Some Observations By The Conference Participants"

To find out how individual Indian women felt about the conference and their reasons for coming to it, 20 women were interviewed, at random, on the second day of the conference. The survey results elicited a diversity of responses; some are recorded, as follows:

One woman said that traditional (Indian) women have many problems they want to voice -- discrimination of women in bordertowns, such as Gallup (New Mexico), Holbrook and Winslow (Arizona).

Another said she heard about the workshop over the radio (a typical response of the "traditional-oriented Indian woman conferee"). She enjoyed the first day's session. She said the main problem was that all the work at home and all the responsibilities were upon the women. Her solution was that all responsibilities should be shared by man and woman, equally.

One woman said, "Maybe we can find some funds to improve current programs that need improvement, such as health and unemployment problems which are priority needs on the Navajo reservation."

A lady from Nazlini, Arizona, said people talk "themselves to death" about daily unmet needs -- housing, poor roads, water, electricity, and so forth. "I came to this meeting with the understanding that we would talk about these problems but this is not so. The only thing I learned from this conference is legal issues and how we might be able to go about solving some legal problems we face."

A woman from Phoenix, Arizona, observed that the "Conference was very informative with a good exchange of ideas, of problems affecting women and the availability of resources for women. Program was very positive, not boring or tiring. The versatility of the speakers was good . . ." She had not heard of such a conference like this for women in Phoenix, and would like to have one in Phoenix.

Another woman from Phoenix observed "there should be more audience participation after each speaker but I understand we were pressed for time." Several non-Navajo women

had complained about the need for translations into Navajo for the majority of the audience, saying that this conference was for all women, not just Navajos. This individual thought, "It was a good idea -- it was for the benefit of the older, Navajo people."

An older woman commented that she had come because of a radio announcement saying that the conference would be held with the audience responding to the speakers and this would benefit Navajo women. "Each speaker had their say and left, leaving no time for the audience to respond." Also, speakers were speaking at a higher level than what the older Navajo could understand. "They are too high class for us . . ."

A woman from Ramah, New Mexico, said the high point of the conference "were the discussions about housewife's isolation and helplessness, that women need to speak up for themselves, not let others speak for them."

In reference to the speech of Geridee Wheeler,

an observer said that she was "a bit too idealistic but the hopefulness is real and the answers concrete. . . idealistic in asserting that if one human being is different, we all suffer, and naive in saying that we all enjoy the same problems. Mental health professions, as she says, must be and are becoming aware of additional handicaps of minority women -- additional to usual problems and womenhood involving primarily racial discrimination." Ms. Wheeler also said, "Indian women are more frustrated, overworked, and tired, than bored." and "minorities in addition (to the usual problems) are forced to be fearful and timid."

Ms. Wheeler's latter comment was reinforced later in the afternoon of the first day. Claudine Bates, a Navajo attorney with a legal aid program in the norther part of the Navajo Nation, at Shiprock, New Mexico, told the audience that her Navajo clients were not afraid to "stand up for their sheep grazing rights" or "for their children" or "for their land use rights." She went on to say, however, "you are afraid to stand up for your own personal rights. Don't be. Get out there and act for yourselves, as mothers! as women!"

WHO ATTENDED THE CONFERENCE?

This Conference, the first of its kind, was attended by women of the Southwest Tribes, many of whom represent the last enclave of Indian tribalism in America.

THE WOMEN RESPONDENTS TO A SAANII SURVEY

A survey (by Saanii Associates, Inc.) to gather some basic data about the women conferees was conducted. The original intent was to utilize the data for evaluative purposes. Not enough data was gathered about the traditional Indian women: their inexperience in filling forms; the absence of free time were two of the constraining factors. However, since most of the returned data was provided by the educated women, this section of the report deals mostly with the attitudes of the "professional career" Indian women.

THE SURVEY: Procedures and Questionnaires

Three survey instruments were prepared for the conferee, as follows:

1. Form One: Basic Attitudes of Women (100 forms distributed)
2. Form Two: Six Areas of Concern (Topics in the Workshops) (100 Forms distributed)
3. Form Three: Biography of Indian Women (300 forms distributed)

The women who poured into the Civic Center for this conference represented a wide spectrum of Indian women. They were the professional career women -- social workers, teachers, administrators, counselors, nurses. They were the non-professional workers of the Tribe, the BIA, and the USPHS. Mostly, they were the traditional-oriented homemakers, wearing their finest Navajo dress (at least two-thirds of the audience were obviously the traditional Navajo women). It is this latter group who wanted immediate action to meet their most basic survival needs. A few white women also attended the conference, but it was obvious that they came to listen, to share their experiences, but not to lead this conference.

Those observing the conference learned that we need to know more about ourselves, as minority women. Who are we? How can we re-unite as women, to help one another?

Sâanii Associates, Inc., along with the planners of the conference, expected an approximate 200-300 attendance. Sâanii Associates planned to sample 1/3 of the attendees and prepared 100 forms of the three questionnaires. Over 700 persons attended the conference! (Later, an additional 200 "Biography" forms were duplicated and distributed.)

Form Two was prepared to determine what the women knew about the six predesignated conference topics and to see how much they had learned at the end of the conference regarding these topics. Fifty women (who planned to stay at the conference both days) were selected to complete Form Two on Day One, and again, on Day Two. By completing the same questionnaire , Sâanii hoped to determine if there was any perceptual knowledge gain on these topics. However, only 15% of Form Two was returned.

THE SURVEY: Results

Fifty-eight of 100 respondents returned Form One; 15 of 100 respondents returned Form Two; 82 of 300 respondents returned Form Three.

A report was prepared on the results of Form One and Form Three. There was not enough conclusive data returned

on Form Two. Tentative patterns (from Form Two) indicated that the women respondents either needed to become more familiar with the six areas of concern or that other areas of concern should be covered in the workshops. This is an interesting pattern since those 15 respondents (of Form Two) were the most educated Indian women who attended the conference. Sâanii Associates recommends that the plan (for Form Two) be re-introduced in the next conference. Resource persons and workshop leaders should be designated to do a "pre and post" sampling of their workshop participants. It is recommended that the sample be kept small making the sampling procedure easier to handle.

Attached to this report as Appendix II, is a statistical breakdown of the questions and answers submitted by the 58 participants who were polled. Also attached as Appendix III are the statistics taken from the biographies of the 82 polled participants.

BASIC ATTITUDES OF EDUCATED INDIAN WOMEN REGARDING "WOMEN'S ISSUES"

"Education and the Indian Woman"

> "If several hundred Indian women entered the educational system each year without losing those cultural qualities that make her human, they could begin to transform that society which desperately needs changing."

This statement made by Ms. Yazzie during her speech at the conference exemplifies one of the great needs recognized by most Indian women. Over half of the 58 women who responded to this set of questions mentioned the problem of getting a good education. (50 of 58 women have had at least one year of college and 11 have more than four years of college) (General characteristics of the 58 respondents are included in Appendix I.)

"Special Problems of Being a Woman"

The 58 women polled were asked to list what they felt were the special problems of women. The same problems recurred time and time again on the returned questionnaires: job discrimination; lack of child-care facilities for working mothers; special training for needed jobs; unequal pay for equal work; "Men are not ready to accept women as equals in the job market;" discrimination in courts of law, especially in cases of rape; stereotyping of women as being "fragile, helpless, dumb, etc." Many of the respondents said that women were discriminated against simply because they are women.

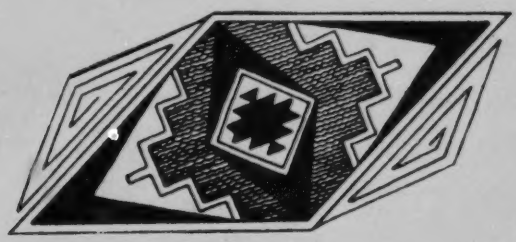
Thirty of the 58 respondents are married; 30 of the 58 hold "professional" jobs. Most of the respondents agreed that a "woman's place" is not in the home, "A woman's place is wherever she is fulfilling a need socially, economically, educationally, culturally, as well as politically, not only for the common good, but for herself as a person as well." Fifty-four of the 58 respondents felt that men should share child-rearing duties and the housework.

"Attitudes Towards the Women's Liberation Movement"

The majority of the 58 respondents felt that Indian women should be involved in the women's liberation movement because, in the words of the respondents, "Liberation should concern everyone;" or "Women should join forces for their common cause;" or "Women are not looked at equally in this 'so-called liberty and justice for all' country. Something must be done. Everyone and not just Indian women should work at this situation."

An opposing view was that the women's liberation movement as known today, is not for the Indian woman since her values and problems are not identical to those of the non-Indian woman. Indian women can support each other in this effort.

Another significant comment was, "the goals and objectives of Indian women are different from what white liberationists desire. Indian women want to better their people's lives . . . the non-Indian women want to better their own individual lives. One concept requires cooperation and compromise for the good of all. The other, independence, sometimes at the cost of others . . . "



"Extend the Role of Indian Women"

Thirty-seven of the 58 women polled indicated that Indian women should try to change conditions for other Indian women. They were asked how change could be accomplished. Many felt that women working together could improve educational opportunities, job training programs, and employment possibilities. Others felt that more responsible child care facilities should be developed so that women could expand their interest areas. Some women

suggested that more women should run for office instead of just voting in elections. "Get out there and become a tribal councilperson . . . the role of women in tribal government will do more for us than just voicing our opinions." Most of the women felt that conditions could and would be changed if women got together more often and shared information about issues which concern all women; if they worked together as a community, they could alter common problems.

These were the primary responses elicited from Form One. Please see the attached Appendix for a description of additional responses.

> "In the rearing of our infants, and in the education of our women, we need all the help we can get. And most of the help must come from each other. There is no room for destructive gossip and backbiting, because we are all in this together. Together we can change the world. Alone we will disintegrate into the worst aspects of the world we wish to change. . ." (Ethelou Yazzie)

CONCLUSION

The conference was a success despite the usual mechanical problems which plague conferences held in Window Rock, Arizona. Publicity for the conference was through "Navajo Radio" and personal invitations to representative Southwestern Indian women's organizations. Over half of the women who attended the conference were traditional Navajo women who had responded to Dr. Annie D. Wauneka's radio invitation. The high attendance at the conference was an overwhelming demonstration of the Indian women's interest in this event.

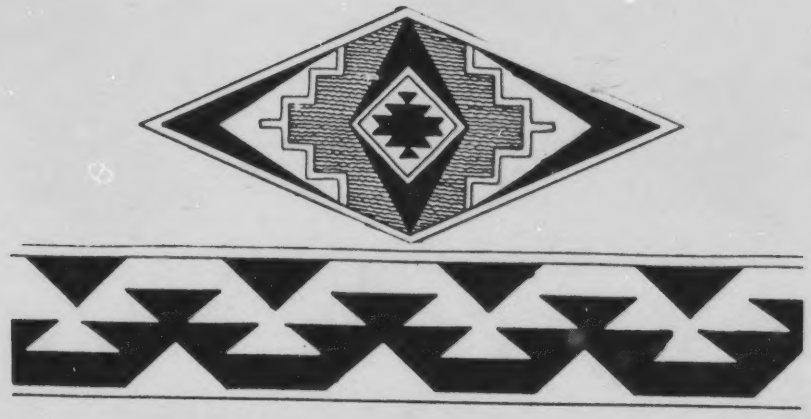
Professional, highly educated Indian women, representing the fields of social work, education, administration, health, and so forth, were the planners, leaders, and speakers of the conference. Educated women who attended the event and who responded to the Saanii Associates' poll said that such a conference was a "must" to confront today's problems. Most women who came said they had expected "something else" indicating to the evaluator that there was a vast difference between the expectations of the "professional career women" and the Navajo traditionalists. The tradi-

tionalists who attended spoke mostly of survival issues, i.e., food, shelter, clothing, and so forth; they did not discuss "feminist" or "sexist" issues as is generally known to anglo American women.

Out of 100 women contacted, 15% of them responded to a Saanii poll to find out how much they knew about the predesignated conference issues (Funding and Resources; Legal and Jurisdictional Issues; Self-Identity; Special Problems of Aged Indian Women; Special Needs for Handicapped Indian Women; and Relationship Between Tribal, State, and Federal Governments). So few women responded to the questionnaire, and those who did demonstrated very little in-depth knowledge about these issues, indicating the real need for public education of these particular areas.

The conference was billed as the "Southwestern Indian Women's Conference," when, in fact, it was not geared to the Southwestern Indian women, but to the Navajo women. Thus, women from the other Southwestern Tribes did not have a chance to be represented at the conference. Perhaps due to this fact or because women felt that their particular

problems could not be dealt with at such a large gathering, the women said they wanted more localized conferences, workshops, rap sessions, and so forth, in which their special needs could be discussed. The women felt that the dialogue should not end here, but continue at home in their own communities where individual needs and problems could be voiced.



RECOMMENDATIONS

The participants selected one of seven workshops to identify their problems and to develop the ensuing recommendations. The participants voiced their hope that the recommendations will be enacted and endorsed by all persons and organizations working towards the greater welfare of all Indian women and their families.

Workshop 1: Funding and Resources

It is recommended that:

1. Encourage agencies within your state to endorse your proposals for funding of programs;
2. Submit your proposals at the state regional office level;
3. Prevent any duplication of policies. Make sure your proposal is short, to the point, and carefully documented;
4. Learn the A-95 Clearing House Law;
5. Develop important resource persons for help and information;
6. Use the Federal Register;
7. Incorporate your organization under your state statutes;

8. Become acquainted with state planners;

9. Remember the federal grants are easier to work with, but are restrictive;

10. Become informed about new state laws which affect you.

Workshop 2: Legal and Jurisdictional Issues

1. Remedy any existing tribal legislation which fails to help Indian women and their families. For example, it was learned that the Navajo Tribal Codes do not have a provision to support an older, disabled, or improverished wife in the event of divorce after a lengthy period of marriage;

2. Endorse all efforts to increase resources for the divorced or deserted wife. There is a need for investigative services to help these women find out if their absent husbands have any financial resources;

3. Endorse the establishment of an Indian Committee to investigate non-Indian family adoptions of Indian children. Children adopted by non-Indian families lose their culture and Tribal resources;

(Margaret Norris, Director of Adoptions for the State of New Mexico, is striving to change the state adoption laws to prevent wholesale adoption of Indian children by non-Indian families. She is promoting legislation and needs much support from Indian people. Individuals and organizations should contact Ms. Norris at the New Mexico Health and Social Services office in Santa Fe.)

4. Endorse any efforts to help Indian women become aware of their rights. A pamphlet should be written and made available to Indian women. It should describe their rights and list available resources to assure women's rights are not being violated;

5. Support any effort to establish a Commission on the Status of Indian Women's Rights which would investigate any violations;

6. Endorse the efforts to place Indian women into judiciary systems, particularly in the Tribal Courts.

Workshop 3: Self-Identity

1. Put aside your tribal differences and work together as Indian people;

2. Exert your rightful responsibilities as parents of your children rather than passing these responsibilities on to agencies and institutions. Parents should instill in their children a sense of pride as Indians;

3. Become more involved in community affairs, such as school, chapter, and other types of activities;

4. Plan more opportunities to dialogue amongst yourselves, in workshops, training sessions, conferences, and so forth;

5. Make available to Indian women resource persons who are familiar with community programs and services;

6. Work to help your tribe to recognize women as potential leaders and provide opportunities for women to attain top management positions;

7. Support any action which will help working women receive equal wages for equal work as do their male counterparts.

Workshop 4: Special Problems of Aged Indian Women

1. Alert human-helping agencies(BIA, USPHS, Tribal, State) to the large elderly Indian population and request that they meet their needs;

2. Support services to the elderly so that they will become a priority in all of the human-helping agencies. A separate program must be designed to meet the immediate needs of the elderly citizens;

3. Ascertain that the recommendations from this conference are submitted for action to the White House Conference on Aging, and to any other agencies related to the problems of the aging;

4. Endorse the establishment of the Navajo Nation Commission on Aging to initiate and develop alternative resources for the Indian elderly;

5. Endorse all tribal and federal organizations which are currently meeting the needs of the elderly, such as the Chinle, Arizona, Extended Care Facility which provides a "close to home" service for its Navajo clientel.

Workshop 5: Special Needs for Handicapped Indian Women

1. Provide information to all Indian parents regarding the availability of resources for the handicapped Indian person;

2. Endorse all efforts to develop additional services to the handicapped;

3. Encourage the training of more Indian para-professionals to assist in providing services to the home-bound handicapped person;

4. Endorse efforts to provide community transportation for the handicapped person to utilize existing facilities and resources;

5. Endorse efforts to develop Respite Services (Day Care) for the handicapped persons whenever the guardian or parent needs this service;

6. Provide more vocational workshops for the handicapped person;

7. Encourage fuller coordination amongst various agencies for the benefit of the handicapped;

8. Increase PHS services for the handicapped person;

9. Develop a comprehensive evaluation program for the handicapped person to include psychological, vocational, rehabilitative, and other evaluative type services.

Workshop 6: Relationship Between Tribal, State and Federal Governments

1. Remind the federal government that it is their responsibility to protect and respect the inherent sovereignty of recognized Indian Tribes;

2. Encourage all Indian Tribes to take appropriate action to protect and support the rights and welfare of all Indian women;

3. Support the Indian Preference Act by reminding all agencies which receive funds for Indian people that they are subject to the Act. Support the establishment of all career opportunity programs which are compatible to the purposes and aims of the Indian Preference Act;

4. Support Indian Tribes to lobby as a group on any bills effecting Indian women, such as supporting bills which will establish day care centers on Indian reservations;

5. Encourage all Indian Tribes to provide managerial training for all Indian women who desire it;

6. Lobby to establish a law which will require that Indian Tribes have options to receive all Federal funds directly.

Workshop 7: Navajo Speaking Group

1. Remind all Tribal leaders and all Indian agencies that Indian people need the basic essentials met -- housing, food, employment, health care, and so forth;

2. Demand more housing for all Indian people;

3. Improve and expand present IHS services to include more comprehensive, specialized services at the field clinic level;

4. Employ more Navajos in all levels of IHS, especially in the professional and para-professional levels;

5. Pressure all Indian reservation programs and agencies to hire more Indian women -- provide training and better paying jobs;

6. Improve and expand the paved road system on reservations;

7. Enact tribal legislation which protect (legally) and recognize individual "customary use" grazing permits and protect individual property;

8. Encourage more political participation of Navajo women on local, tribal, state, and federal levels to resolve current issues and problems;

9. Enact legislation (tribal and state) to protect Navajo-made crafts such as rugs, silver jewelry, baskets, etc.;

10. Improve and expand the quality of counseling services to alcoholics in each region of the Navajo Nation;

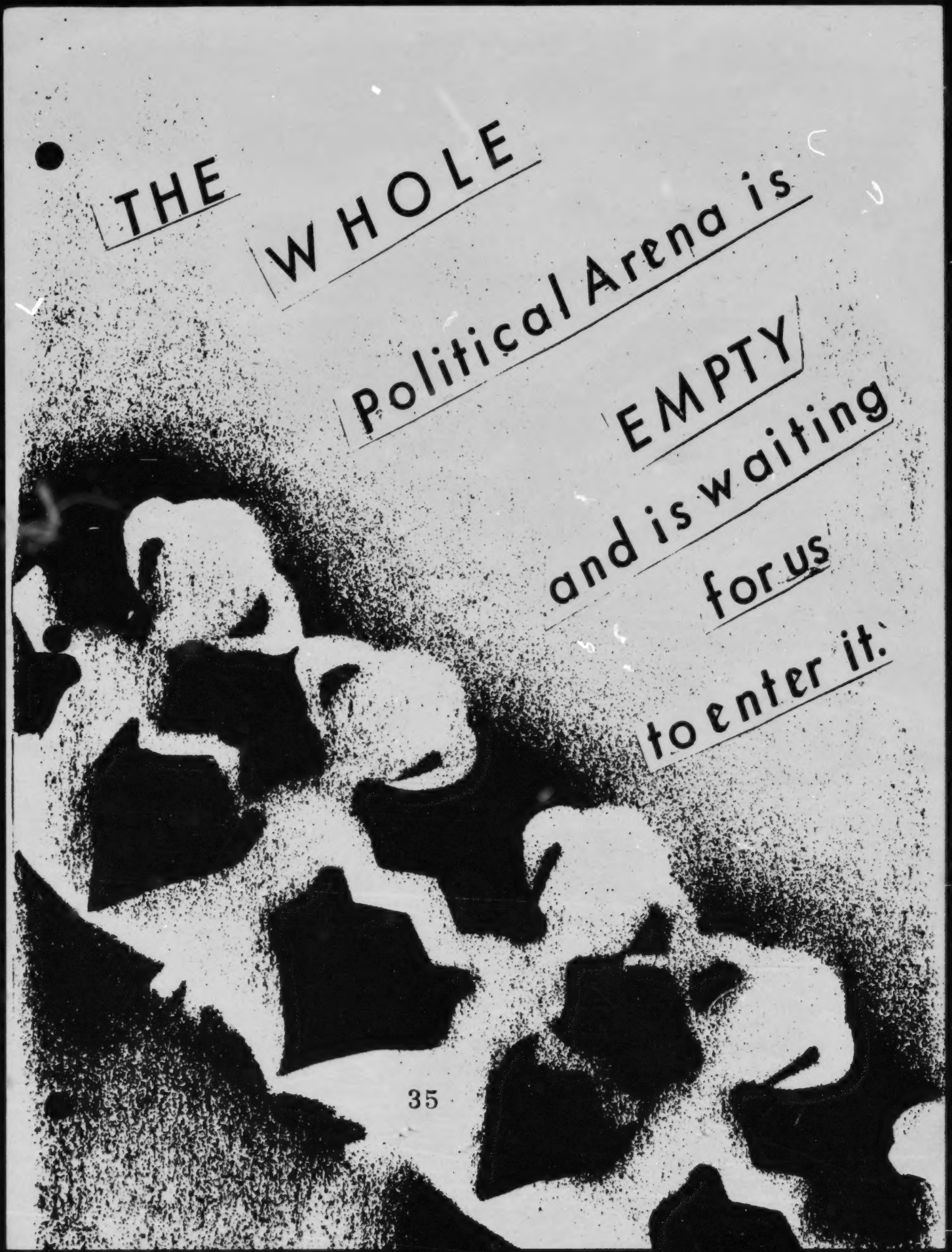
11. Improve and expand services and programs for veterans which would utilize more Navajo counselors.

To conclude the conference, the chairperson introduced the following resolution which was approved by the conference participants:

> "Since the conference was a short two-day session and barely touched on the full needs and wishes of the Indian women, an on-going committee should be appointed and delegated the responsibility to see to it that the discussions and recommendations are not left only as discussions and recommendations.
>
> "It was decided to set up a committee of interested women from the various fields of interest to study the conference materials, and outline actions to be taken, including contact with appropriate agencies designed to provide and carry out their program responsibility.
>
> "The membership of this Task Group will be open to those genuinely interested and those dedicated to the objectives of carrying out the conference recommendations."

It became evident to the writer-observer of this conference that women must map strategies for change and organize a dynamic force to meet these plans for change. According to Ethelou Yazzie,

"In our unique situation as Indian women we face the immediate problem of political power. To a certain extent we have made gains in the amount of power we as women have in the field of education and the power to affect the way a community thinks. But the whole political arena is empty of our organization and is waiting for us to enter it. The greatest problem that faces us today is how can we organize as a political force so that we, as a group, have the right to demand our rightful position in Tribal and government programs. Until we organize for political action, one major river of wealth and position is closed to us. We must organize so that we can force the established people to listen to our ideas, our solutions, and our hopes."


THE WHOLE
Political Arena is
EMPTY
and is waiting
for us
to enter it.

AN EVALUATIVE STATEMENT

(Remarks by Gloria J. Emerson)

The conference was successful because it conveyed the message that Indian women do have problems and they do want to talk about them.

The highlights of the conference were:

1. The welcome speech by Dr. Annie D. Wauneka;
2. The presence of many prominent Indian women;
3. The heavy turnout of conference participants including a majority of traditional Navajo women;
4. The dynamic speeches by several "new" women leaders such as Trudy Multine, Ethelou Yazzie, and others;
5. The opportunity for the traditional Navajo women to confer about their problems during the second conference day.

The primary complaints shared by many participants and supported by this evaluator dealt with the mechanics of the conference. The agenda was crowded with too many speakers representing diverse backgrounds. Official recordings of the conference were needed. Indian women, from the professional career women to the traditional homemaker, had contrasting expectations of what the conference

should accomplish. There were problems with bilingual translations (from Navajo to English to Navajo). These particular bilingual translation problems plague many excellent conferences.

A major problem dealt with the facility: The Civic Center in Window Rock is outmoded, inflexible, and no longer fits the growing demands of the Navajo Nation. The Civic Center is not suited for a variety of conference activities. (It is unfortunate that the leading Indian Nation in the United States doesn't have decent conference facilities for its own tribe and/or its invited guests. Yet the Navajo Nation expends a large sum of money and staff time attending conferences away from the Navajo Nation, hosted by other tribal groups. By failing to meet this simple problem we continuously demonstrate our lack of ingenuity.)

The agenda included diverse speakers such as Navajo Tribal Chairman, Peter MacDonald; Councilwoman Wauneka; Special Assistant to the White House, Dr. Theodore Mares; professional Indian women; youth panelists; a psychiatrist; as well as many more. A number of participants liked the varied range of speakers "because there was something

planned for everyone." Other participants felt the format was too broad, moved too quickly, and didn't allow the participants time to think about, discuss, or absorb the speeches. The fact that some of the speakers were not prepared demonstrated a lack of interest on their part and a waste of valuable conference time.

Numerous dignitaries attended, lending stature to the conference and giving concretion to the fact that women do have special problems because they are women. Several participants felt the "VIP's" helped to set the stage for future conferences. However, others felt the dignitaries as "outsiders" crowded other potentially good speakers off the agenda and "dignitaries" who are not fully utilized are a waste of time.

Several participants commented that the men speakers at this conference were incoherent, redundant, and uninspiring. It did not seem appropriate to them that there were so many male speakers on the already overcrowded agenda.

Only two or three of all the speakers actually addressed those issues considered "feminist" or "sexist" issues. There was little or no public debate in the general sessions about "social consciousness-raising" issues. As the conference progressed, it became apparent that such issues are better known amongst the educated Indian women, whereas, the non-educated women were more concerned about the basic survival needs of food, clothing, and so forth.

One well-known Indian man gave a speech asking Indian women "not to get involved in the women's liberation movement" and reminded them they were always considered equal to men, according to Indian legends. He said the women's liberation movement was led by white women who had time on their hands. This famous Indian leader missed the opportunity to begin a worthy dialogue with more than 50% of his constituents, the women of his tribe. Instead, he delivered his remarks at only a few Indian women who

actually consider themselves "hip, liberated women." The majority of the assembled women indicated there were many problems facing them as women but they felt their situation differs from that of the anglo women. While speaking, many traditional Indian women and their families poured into the conference, demonstrating a high level of interest in the theme of the conference.

Not very much is known about "Indian Women Today." Some people say the Indian women today are the most oppressed women in America because they are relegated to the drudgery of housework and nothing else. There are few meaningful jobs for Indian women. Others oppose this view saying Indian women "have it made in many of the matrilineal Indian societies." Both views contradict each other. The American mass media either depicts the Indian woman as being the perennial Pocahontas or the drowsy squaw. Very few people (responsible for the mass media) ask the Indian woman directly to define or to explore the Indian woman psyche. The evaluator believes that some sort of discussion amongst Indian women should hinge upon important "self-identity" considerations. Who are the Indian women of today? What are the roles of Indian women today? It is very likely that if the attitudes of

the traditional homemaker are surveyed today, they would respond, "their place is in the home." Yet many of their daughters are struggling to establish a niche (above the secretary level) in the working world of men. Does working in the tribal and BIA bureaucracy make an Indian woman less feminine? Does aspiring to be "an Indian politician" make an Indian woman less feminine? Who defines what "feminine" means? Playboy Magazine? McCall Magazine? Ms. Magazine? Is there a conflict between the modern and traditional roles and expectations of Indian women? Is alcoholism a growing problem amongst Indian women?

There were six workshops designed to probe six different areas affecting Indian women:

1. Funding and resources for women;
2. Legal and jurisdictional issues;
3. Self-identity;
4. Problems of the aged Indian women;
5. Problems of the handicapped Indian women;
6. Tribal and jurisdictional problems.

A seventh workshop was created during the conference because of the heavy demand for it. The workshop, called the "Navajo Speaking Group," was designed for the non-English speaking women. With the exception of Dr. Wauneka, there was no other traditionally-oriented Navajo woman who spoke only in Navajo to the assembly, although nearly two-thirds of the conference participants were non-English speaking, traditional Navajo women.

The most dynamic workshop, the Navajo Speaking Group, was held outside the Civic Center. Women stood up one after another and recounted their problems. The dynamics of this workshop vividly contrasted with the more somber, more "polite" softer-voiced dialogue in the other six

workshops. The other six workshops were obviously aimed toward the more educated, more professional Indian women who set a less forceful pace -- more anglocized, and more pedantic. In the opinion of the observer, these workshops seemed stilted and boring, in contrast with the seventh workshop.

These were some of the salient factors which emerged from this conference. There were some problems at this conference, nevertheless, it was beautiful to see women and their families pour in from places such as Shonto, Arizona, Tohatchi, New Mexico, Hopiland and Chinle, Arizona. Someone said there was even a delegation from Washington State! And there was the beautiful delegation from Phoenix, Arizona, who spent hours preparing a program which was not presented because of lack of time.

For the first time in modern history, Indian women of the Southwest were asked to block out their needs as women and to map out strategies for change.

The impact of this massive spirit was inspiring. Through it all, I heard the conference leaders, Nancy Evans, Ellouise de Groat, and others, ask themselves, "how do

we keep the interest of the women? How do we keep from letting them down, back into the mire of old frustrations and apathy as 'shack-wives'?" The danger of a conference like this is to raise the people's hopes and then give them empty dreams.

We all want to encourage these women leaders who sponsored this conference to continue trying to reach more lives. We all want change. A change which will ignite a beautiful awakening, where people will rise towards the potentiality which lies dormant in all of us. People such as the hardworking Nancy Evans, Ellouise de Groat, Eva Benally, and Dr. Annie D. Wauneka, and others believe in our human potentiality and are trying to spark off a new human self-development. They need our help! We need their help!

THIS REPORT AND GRAPHICS WERE PREPARED BY:

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(Saanii is a Navajo word meaning women. The Saanii Associates is owned by three Navajo women who provide technical assistance to tribal communities.)

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SPEECH GIVEN BY:

Dr. Annie Dodge Wauneka, Navajo Tribal Council Delegate and Member, International Women's Year 1975

I. BACKGROUND:

The National Commission on the Observance of International Women's Year was established by Executive Order of the President on January 9, 1975 and the 39 members were selected and announced on April 2, 1975. Four of the members are congressional members and rest are private citizens. I am a member of the National Commission.

1975 was proclaimed as International Women's Year by the United Nations General Assembly in December 1972. The major international event sponsored by the United Nations for this year was a World Conference held in Mexico City from June 19 to July 2, 1975. Over 1300 persons from 130 countries attended the conference. The World Plan of Action adopted unaminously by the Conference delegates maps out guidelines directed at national governments, regional and international bodies to accelerate women's full participation in economic, social, political and cultural life.

The National Commission has established 12 committees which include the Committee for Women with Special Problems. This Committee held its first meeting on May 16, 1975. The Committee focuses on several areas including: The Special Needs of Young Women: Women in Trouble with the Law (and their children): The Problems of Women as they pertain to the American Indians, Asian-Americans, Black, Spanish-Speaking, the Elderly and Widows.

The Conference for today and tomorrow proposes to review the special problems pertaining to American Indian Women. You may feel we rushed into the conference and that we should have allowed more time but we are against a deadline. The National Commission will expire December 30, 1975 and we

felt that if any Indian group wanted any special follow-up conference in their own area you would have some time to secure this before the end of the year. The conference today proposes to cover the broad areas of issues related to legal protection for Indian Women while at school, at home, at work or in the community; issues related to the availablility of funds and resources for Indian women to use in programs which benefit them or their children, or which Indian women can use in their education, training or other needs; and the issues of self-identity where we need to review our roles in assuming leadership in the family, community, agencies or governments. Since the initial plans, three additional workshops have been added: these include a session on needs for the elderly women, needs for handicapped persons and a review of the relationship between Federal, Tribal and state governments. The last three workshops were added because they are of immediate and critical importanct to Indian people.

The conference is being evaluated in terms of its effectiveness in getting at the issues raised and a formal report will be available by the end of October, 1975. If any group anticipates a conference in their own area please get in touch with any of the Committee members and we will help all we can.

II. PROBLEMS OF INDIAN WOMEN:

My short talk cannot begin to cover all the different tribes, the different languages, ways of life which exist with the American Indians. Perception of problems by the different tribes vary just as much. Additional factors as the peculiar relationship with the Federal governments and the State governments diversifys the problems more. Many times the broader

issues of the availability of bread and butter or fishing rights or water rights become a more critical issue than equal opportunity for women and social life. In other words, the struggle to maintain an Indian Tribal self-identity sometimes becomes more important than the question of equal opportunity between Indian men and Indian women.

A. SELF-IDENTITY

Despite the bigger issue for Indian people, current issues for Indian women include a need for a stringent review of the "Role of Indian Women" - - our past history is so close with us, nudging us how we are supposed to be; yet, today we are forced to make choices to remain as our history dictates or to sort out what we must maintain and what we must change if we are to continue our Indian uniqueness and Indian Nations. Basic beliefs of Indians must remain unchanged. Our task is to sort out the basic beliefs and practices and teach one another those things which make us what we are. The concept that Indian women do not assume leadership role should be reviewed in terms of "what is a leader". Traditionally, I do not believe Indian men treated women as dumb in a customary setting. With recent development of political machinery and bureaucratic organization, there suddenly is evident different perspective of women and the roles of women. The concern of Indian women or equal opportunity to participate in the development of Indian community evolves around the last situation. The conference will serve to help us to begin reviewing some of the important areas we need to consider and we must positively begin sorting out those items which are important for us to do if we are to help maintain the identity of our own people.

B. LEGAL PROTECTION

Most Tribal governments and tribal organizations respond to National legislation and national funding requirements and Indian women have all the usual legislative protection available to women..on paper. Deficiency arises because the technical assistances and the mechanism needed to enforce those protections for Indian women are not available; even the resources to make Indian women aware of their rights are not available. In our area we are aware of only the Federal Women's Organization but we do not fully know their functions nor their purpose. We are also aware that there are several established mechanisms at the National level whose purpose are to monitor and implement non-discrimination on the basis of sex. I understand at the President's level there is a Special Assistant to the President for Women, an Office of Women's Program in the White House; President's Advisory Council on the Status of Women; and at the Washington level there is a Department of Labor Women's Bureau, Department of H.E.W. Women's Action Program, and Advisory Councils to each of the Secretaries of Labor, Defense, and H.E.W. quite pertinent for Indian women would be a request for a position on one of these or for technical assistance from these organizations. It is possible that we will find that specific incidents related to Indian women discrimination are not widely nor readily known because most of the effort for Indians are directed to securing basic funds for programs which benefit all tribal members. Realizing this, Indian women may need to initiate the enforcement of equal opportunity for Indian women through a complete assessment of the problem. For the Navajo area, it appears a very cirtical problem exists with the enforcement of court orders around child support. Only a thorough study would bring out the extent and seriousness of this problem.

C. PROBLEM WITH FUNDING OF PROGRAMS FOR INDIAN WOMEN

Issues related to basic human needs of food and shelter are the same for Indian Women as well as for Indian men. Issues related to self-improvement in terms of education training, employment and important roles in decision making are questionable for Indian women. Many times the discrimination because of race is more acutely practiced than is discrimination because of sex.

Indian women must have access to employment, training, education and the political processes if they are to contribute fully and responsibility to the life of their Indian Tribes, the Indian community and Indian families. The challenge and task for us is how to pursue the development of the opportunity to secure and to exercise the responsibility involved in making programs. We cannot afford to sit with arms folded and wait for the responsibility to be delivered to us; we must develop strategies designed NOT TO replace men but to work on equal basis with them; this means Indian women must strive to reach decision-making positions and share the responsibilities and duties on equal basis with men. We must strive to secure commitment and understanding of men that women are assets in making decisions regarding the social needs of children and families because they are close to them, and that we can help to structure programs which are effective. For the Navajo Area, lack of funds for decent houses is terrible....you talk about housewives, here we have many shack-wives. A few women in a critical decision making capacity may help come up with a better system to help those people who are still living in tar-paper-covered shacks.

Employment and training is another critical situations. Professionally trained women are few which merely indicates training and educational oppor-

tunities are not realistically available. On papers in current programs are beautiful plans which show how adult education programs will train people; how the scholarship programs will help those who wish to go to college, how the Civil Service Programs will promote Affirmative Action and Upward-Mobility for personnel with potentials.

The situation for those persons with little or no formal education, real opportunities must be non-existant.

I am recommending a thorough discussion on how to make educational and training opportunities available for Indian women. Many women would be glad to receive basic instructions in spoken and written English. Why can't we have basic adult education for parents along with the children; we have many schools with few students and we are wasting space. Why don't we provide basic instruction in practical trades such as sewing, carpentry, or woll plant. Why can't we have our own Navajo women sew all the school clothing? Why can't we have a Wrangler factory here: Why can't we make our own hand - made furniture. We already have sawmills!! The women I have contacted have always asked, when will employment be available to us? This is a legitimate and reasonable request.

III. DECISION MAKING ROLES AND STRATEGIES

Indian women cannot escape involvement in political and decision making roles. Again, strategies need to be mobilized to assure that these powers are diverted to activities which promote appropriate goals of peace for Indian people, our plans must include programs which will integrate Indian women into the developmental processes:

1. We need actions by local government (Tribal Councils and chapters) which support efforts of equal opportunity for Indian women; (a) Indian women must assume responsibility for assuring that their Tribal government puts into action the national policies related to women, and to secure necessary funds to assure that the implementation of policies take place: (b) that an on-going joint committee or organization of Indian women be developed to assure that any policies developed here at the Conference or at the National and International level are carried out and funded to assure that they are implemented.

2. We need actions by Indian women's group to devise strategies to change the attitude and behavior which are detrimental to the opportunity for Indian women. These include first, HOW WE, Indian Women, see ourselves, and not just how the men see us; you know ... lack of motivation is a trait tagged on women, and on Indian....Indian women wear the tag on both shoulders-----that is the image we must look at when we say mirror, mirror, on the wall, who is?

3. On-going Indian Women organizations is needed to pursue lobbying at National level and to review current programs, evaluate effectiveness, and monitor programs.

SPEECH GIVEN BY:

Mrs. Ellouise DeGroat, Navajo, Director,
Mental Health Programs,
Navajo Area Indian Health Service

I work, and I know of four excellent reasons for all women to work. First, there is the moral reason. Every woman should have the opportunity to fully fill her personal goals, to develop her natural gifts to become the person she has the talent to become. Secondly, it's good business for women to work. Why waste 51% of the country's brains? Thirdly, it's against the law to discriminate against women - - and against several laws to discriminate against Indian Women. And the most pressing reasons of all, money. Nine/tenths of the women who work need the money. Most of them, as heads of households, or whose husbands earn less that $7,000 a year, need the money desperately.

But do they get the money?

NO.

In 1971, the average woman made only 3/4 as much money as the average man - - often while doing the same job.

Women with a lot of drive, with strong egos were the exception. For most, because of discrimination in employment practices, because of poor job training, because of early female conditioning; women were on the bottom of the labor ladder and minority women were the very lowest.

That's been well documented.

A 1973 field study by the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights called the employment problems of Indians in Arizona enoromous. They said that federal, state and municipal agencies have been deficient in hiring Indians and even the Bureau of Indian Affairs and Indian Health Service, which are required by law to give preference to hiring Indians, have locked Indians into the lowest salary levels.

Yet, Indian women are better off than Indian men, and overall the federal government has been a good employer.

For instance, the Indian Health Service employs 721 women in the Navajo Area. Only 56 are GS-8 or higher, but five of the top positions are held by women, four by Indian women.

That leaves 665 in various levels of employment, the vast majority at GS-3 and GS-4 levels.

But many women don't aspire to more. They are the victims of cultural conditioning, which said that a woman's place was in the home, or that a man had a career, a woman just worked to help out.

Indian women had the further barriers of illiteracy, and of homes and schools which encouraged girls to learn service skills which belied their intelligence and further locked them into lower of levels of employment.

But we can say, and I really like that advertisement, "you've come a long way baby!"

Thank goodness all of this is changing.

Today's woman will live to be 75. She will have 2.7 children and will be done with childbearing by the time she is 30.

She will have 35 to 45 years to work outside the home.

And she can finally win equality on her job.

Women have won $48 million by following up on the Equal Pay Act of 1963. And won important benefits from some of the other laws recently enacted.

The total message is that no woman or minority is to be discriminated against in employment.

It is up to you, to us, to learn the details of each law, and what it can do. The laws are simply tools. There is no automatic protection under any law, but once a complaint is filed, it will be checked out and corrections made if necessary.

To begin with the equal pay act - - women must receive the same pay as a man doing a basically similar job.

The Civil Rights Act prevents discrimination in hiring, firing, compensation, promotion, fringe benefits and other conditions of employment.

The education amendments prohibit sex discrimination in schools receiving federal aid. This means previously closed fields are now open to women.

Minorities may not be discriminated against by an employer of 50 or more persons who holds a federal contract; and older women have protection in the age discrimination law.

And don't worry; harrassment of complaining employees is prohibited.

But this puts the burden on you.

Now that employers have to hire, promote and pay women what they are worth, Are you ready? When was the last time you took advantage of a seminar offered through your job?

Does your boss always send the same persons? Does your boss know that you are interested in upgrading your skills?

Have you investigated jobs with on-the-job-training, such as the Navajo Area Head Start offers. Empioyees have classes every Friday while school is in session. Similar type jobs don't offer this.

But the job training must be weighed against the minus side - - Head start employees are out of work in the summer, often on unemployment assistance.

Look into summer school, night school, or government assistance programs. For every 10 years you work for the federal government, they will pay to send you to school for one year.

Some private foundations will pay you your regular salary as well as school expenses to continue your education. Check with the Navajo Health Authority for one source of these funds.

Today education is not just for a few. Everyone needs the best education they can master.

Can we instill this in our children? Are we letting girls off easy because they are getting married, or because they already have a child?

We must help our school counselors to work with the girls, to make them reach for more. We need to keep in mind that 9 out of 10 women will work at some time in their life, and probably for 35 to 45 years.

There is no way around it. A good education is essential, and unless you are 64, it's not too late to get it.

It takes work and sacrifice but its the best way to guarantee yourself a good job.

Finally, I'd like to talk to those who have won their battle stripes; who have an education and position commensurate with their abilities.

We can help those we supervise by helping to humanize their job.

Evaluate the headaches of working women and then see what you can do to allievate them.

A general consensus is that the working woman's greatest problems are job equality, child care, and house cleaning.

Begin by learning the new laws and making sure they are followed in your office.

Realize that even seasoned workers have pangs of guilt when they can't attend school functions or be home when their children are.

Encourage part time jobs while children are small. This helps parents keep their skills fresh and eliminates the need for retraining when they are ready to return to work full time.

Arrange job schedules so parents can be with their children after school, or use annual leave weekly to help with scouting or school activities.

Their children will be grown soon; you'll never miss the hours they took off, and they'll never forget them.

Give dignity to those women locked into "housekeeper roles". Put them on your payroll with the same benefits as your other employees, and call their services a fringe benefit.

Send them out in pairs to clean your employees homes on the same regular basis your office is cleaned. Your employees will thank you with more energy to devote to their jobs.

I've gotten away from our problems as Indian women and into the bigger problem of mastering the wife-mother-worker syndrome.

Because in the end, we don't want to be singled out as "special-problems."

We can add our Indian knowledge and Indian talents to any job; and we realize the special relationship we have with our people on our Reservations.

But we can only use these unique skills when we have mastered our personal goals and are comfortable with our image of ourselves.

That takes a knowledge of today's world, a good education and a little bit of luck.

Remember, you are too good to waste.

SPECIAL PROBLEMS OF INDIAN WOMEN IN THE SOUTHWEST

A SPEECH DELIVERED BY ETHELOU YAZZIE

Before I begin, I think you should know that I am, in fact, a failure. The tests I took at the end of high school showed that I should never go to college -- that I would never be able to compete successfully there, or hold a responsible position.

Right there is one of the special problems of Indian women in Education. Your potential leaders are called failures, and, labeled early in life, are denied the chance to somehow gain positions of importance. If we were to study our leaders -- male or female -- we would probably find they were all called failures, at least once, by the educational standards of white society.

That is the first of our problems -- that we are judged by standards that are not our own. And that is why we are here today:to search for our self identity in the midst of pressures and values that may or may not be valid for each one of us. What is it that we do to, or don't do for, our daughters and ourselves, that has kept us from achieving our full potential as leaders, or just as fulfilled human beings? What is holding us back? What is holding us down?

Certainly the law is on our side. At least in the law books. Title Nine does not allow sex discrimination in employment at grade and high schools and expands the ban on the college level.

Title Seven of the United States Civil Rights Act of 1964 says that an employer cannot discriminate against any person because of sex in hiring, salary or promotion.

Just knowing that we have the same rights as a man in the field of education and elsewhere is not going to help us unless that man is also free to get the things we want. Heaven knows that the Indian man has plenty of problems of his own so far as identity and equal treatment under the law is concerned.

Maybe by helping ourselves by forcing those laws to be enforced we can help all of the people. On the other hand, maybe we want different things. Maybe we have a right to demand that things be different for all human beings.

To help ourselves, we must examine ourselves, and the lives we lead. We must see where we are strong, and where, and in what areas we must develop new skills, and new ideas in order to fulfill the individual dreams each of us has.

Across the country, the American Indian population is growing. This population explosion means that there is a higher percentage of young people in each Indian nation than ever before -- at least since the government began counting. The median age is 20.4 years and is growing younger every year.

Naturally then, our first concern is directed toward our young people -- and today our concern is focused on our young women and girls.

In examining our lives, we might admit right now that the problems of educating mature women, and the very old, are far different from the education problems of the young. But because there are more young women, and they are the ones most likely to change, and to change the lives around them, it is the young that I will address first.

Let us take a hard look at the young Indian girl of the Southwest. Generally speaking, she is held back from advanced education and achievement in the wider society by cultural, religious and moral traditions that push her early into the stereotyped female-servant roles that we all know so well. Many of our young girls are forced to take over the full responsibility of keeping the home together and rearing children while both parents work.

Now, right there -- that mother is not in the home -- the mother is out in the working world -- yet the daughter -- the one who might be preparing for a richer, fuller life, -- who might be able to find a job far better than the mother's in the end -- she is the one confined to the home.

Is it any wonder that she drops out of school early? Or gets pregnant through ignorance, or apathy, or just because if she has to watch babies, she might as well watch her own?

Chances are, she will end up doing the same as her mother -- short schooled. She will not have the skills she needs for a better job, and eventually, her daughter will drop out of school to watch her children, while she goes to work to earn enough to keep everyone alive.

One of our first priorities must be to cut the dropout

RATE FOR YOUNG WOMEN. IF A GIRL STAYS IN SCHOOL, SHE WILL BE MORE LIKELY TO GET THE SKILLS THAT WILL PREPARE HER FOR MEANINGFUL WORK. COMPLETING HIGH SCHOOL AND GETTING A DIPLOMA IS IN ITSELF AN ACCOMPLISHMENT THAT WILL BUILD HER EGO AND BOOST HER SELF IMAGE -- HER IDEA OF WHAT SHE IS AND WHAT SHE IS ABLE TO DO.

THERE ARE MANY SOURCES OF FUNDS AVAILABLE TO STUDY THE NEEDS OF YOUNG WOMEN IN OUR AREA. BUT THE STUDIES THAT HAVE BEEN DONE ARE SKETCHY AND INADEQUATE. THEY DO NOT DEAL WITH THESE CRUCIAL ISSUES:

> HOW CAN WE CONTINUE TO EDUCATE OUR YOUNG WOMEN WHO TAKE OVER FAMILY RESPONSIBILITIES WHILE THEY ARE STILL CHILDREN THEMSELVES?.
>
> WHERE WILL THESE YOUNG WOMEN GET THE EMOTIONAL SUPPORT THEY NEED TO BUILD THEIR SELF CONFIDENCE AND SELF ESTEEM?

LET US LOOK AT OURSELVES AS WE EXIST TODAY. THE ANNUAL MEDIAN INCOME FOR AN AMERICAN INDIAN FAMILY IS MUCH LESS THAN FOR THE NON-INDIAN FAMILY. WE ARE PLAGUED WITH CHRONIC UNEMPLOYMENT, AND ARE UNDEREMPLOYED. IN THE WINTER MONTHS, THE EMPLOYMENT FIGURE IS 10%. OUR EDUCATION SYSTEM HAS BEEN STUDIED AND SHOWS A NEED FOR CONCENTRATION ON REMEDIAL WORK, COUNSELING, LANGUAGE SKILLS, VOCATIONAL COUNSELING, AND JOB TRAINING. OUR HEALTH SERVICES ARE NOT COMPARABLE TO THE AVERAGE AMERICAN'S. OUR HOUSING OFTEN LACKS ELECTRICITY AND WATER. THERE HAS BEEN A DEMONSTRATED NEED FOR INCREASED EMPHASIS ON PREVENTATIVE MEDICINE.

EVERY ONE OF THOSE SENTENCES IS A PROBLEM IN ITSELF. WE FIND OURSELVES IN A CYCLE OF LOW INCOME, LARGE FAMILIES, INFERIOR SCHOOLS -- WITHOUT ACCESS TO GOOD LIBRARIES, OR IN MANY SECTIONS, WITHOUT EVEN A CHOICE OF RADIO STATIONS. PRIORITY EFFORTS IN MANY OF OUR FAMILIES ARE CONCENTRATED ON:FOOD, HOUSING, TRANSPORTATION, MEDICAL CARE. THERE IS NO ENERGY OR MONEY -- OR UNDERSTANDING -- LEFT OVER FOR THE ROUTINE EDUCATIONAL NEEDS OF OUR GIRL CHILDREN -- THINGS MANY AMERICAN GIRLS TAKE FOR GRANTED.

WHAT ARE THE THINGS WE NEED? WHAT DO OUR YOUNG GIRLS NEED? ACCORDING TO ONE GOVERNMENT STUDY, OUR NEEDS ARE THESE.

> A COMFORTABLE AND SECURE FAMILY LIFE
> A CREATIVE AND SOLID EDUCATION
> FULL EMPLOYMENT
> ACCESS TO ADVANCEMENT AND HIGHER INCOME
> ADEQUATE HEALTH CARE
> A CHANCE TO PLAY -- AND THE HEALTH, TIME, AND MONEY TO ALLOW PLAY

I WOULD ADD ONE MORE: THE RIGHT TO A HEALTHY AND BEAUTIFUL ENVIRONMENT. MAYBE YOU CAN THINK OF SOME OTHERS. THAT IS WHY WE ARE HERE.

THE OVERRIDING PROBLEM IS THAT BEFORE OUR YOUNG PEOPLE -- NOT ONLY GIRLS -- CAN GET NUMBER TWO ON THE LIST, "A CREATIVE AND SOLID EDUCATION", THEY HAVE TO HAVE ALL THE OTHER THINGS LISTED HERE. THESE ARE THE THINGS THAT MOTIVATE THEM TO SUCCEED IN SCHOOL. THESE ARE THE THING ALL OUR YOUNG PEOPLE -- NOT ONLY GIRLS -- NEED. AND WHAT DO THEY GET?

SOMETIMES THEY ARE BORN LUCKY AND HAVE THEM ALL. OFTEN THEY DO NOT. OFTEN THEY ARE BORN INTO POVERTY, LIVE WITH ONLY ONE PARENT -- OR PARENTS WHO ARE UNEMPLOYED OR UNDEREMPLOYED. MANY OF OUR YOUNG GIRLS ARE PREY TO DISEASE, AND GROW INTO DELINQUENCY. AS THEY MATURE, MANY OF THE INDIAN WOMEN OF THE SOUTHWEST FIND THEY ARE UNABLE TO CARE FOR THEIR CHILDREN THE WAY THEY WANT TO -- AND THEN THEY BECOME ASHAMED OF WANTING ALL THOSE GOOD THINGS. IN DESPAIR, THEY RESIGN THEMSELVES TO A WAY OF LIFE THAT THOUGH DESTRUCTIVE, IS AT LEAST FAMILIAR.

GOVERNMENT BULLETINS ARE FULL OF "PROGRAMS FOR MINORITY YOUTH". THEY INCLUDE PSYCHOTHERAPY, HOME EC TRAINING, DRUG SEMINARS -- CORRECTIVE PROGRAMS TO MAKE UP FOR DEFICIENCIES OTHERS SEE IN OUR LIVES. BUT THERE ARE NO PROGRAMS THAT CAN MAKE OUR LIVES RICH AND FULL AND FULFILLING. WE OURSELVES HAVE TO DO THAT. WE HAVE TO DO IT FOR OURSELVES, OUR DAUGHTERS AND FOR OUR MOTHERS.

WHERE ARE OUR COMMUNITY SUMMER CAMPS, MUSIC LESSONS, DANCING SCHOOLS, ART CLASSES, WHERE HORIZONS EXPAND AND IMAGINATION TAKES OFF? WHERE CAN OUR YOUNG LADIES LEARN HARD PHYSICS, MATH, GYMASTICS, CHEMISTRY? WHERE DO THEY STUDY POETRY? DO THEY KNOW OF THE SCIENTIFIC WONDER OF ECOSYSTEMS? DO MOST OF THEM KNOW ANY ECOSYSTEM BESIDES THE ONE THEY WERE BORN INTO -- OR ANY OTHER SOCIAL SYSTEM?

HOW CAN WE MOTIVATE OUR DAUGHTERS AND OURSELVES TO GO BEYOND THE KNOWN AND THE FAMILIAR IF THERE HAS BEEN NO EXPOSURE AND IF THERE HAS BEEN NO TIME, NO MONEY, AND NO UNDERSTANDING ON THE PART OF THE PARENTS OR THE TEACHERS AND THE TRIBAL AND GOVERNMENT AUTHORITIES?

We must not be ashamed to want these good things. We must work for material and emotional security for all Southwest women. We must open doors to find opportunity and to recognize it when it appears. We must work not only against the odds and limitations that face us, but with the odds, and with the limits until they disappear.

One of the oldest solutions to our problems has been the word EDUCATION. With education we can change our lives. With education we can break the poverty cycle. Well, 95% of all Navajo children 7 through 13 go to school. But by the time they are 16, many children leave school to go to work. Why? Because they need (or their families need) the money. Because schools are not good -- they do not give the child the things she knows she needs. Maybe sometimes, they make it seem too difficult for her to succeed.

Remember what I said at the beginning of my address -- the school told me I was a failure. Why? Because the school was not looking at me -- at Ethelou -- it was looking at another person, the same as all the other children. It saw me as a stereotype, and the school prepared people for stereotype jobs -- as domestics, and for clerical positions. Many times this has been done just because IT IS EASY TO TRAIN PEOPLE TO DO THESE THINGS. To train people for responsibility and authority is difficult. It requires teachers who do not have a double standard -- one for the children of Scottsdale and another for the children of Chinle. It requires teachers to help children set goals for themselves, and parents and leaders who have faith that the girl child can meet these goals. Then it requires counselors and authority figures who will help the child have faith in herself -- the kind of self confidence that can tell a tester -- I know better. I can do it. I must do it. I will do it.

We must have a quiet faith in ourselves and in our children. A strong faith that will carry them far beyond what we ever dreamed possible for ourselves.

What else do schools do wrong? The old story of boarding schools far away from the child's home is familiar to us all. The long distances dilute the parents' influence over the child. Contrary to government ideas of the past, most parents want their children to do well in school.

We as a people have nothing against wisdom -- we revere wisdom. But we do have a lot to say about lost identity, lost persons, lost minds. The long distances dilute the child's concept of herself, of her identity, and rob her of the strength and support of her family in the years that she needs it the most.

If we are to prepare ourselves and our daughters for better jobs -- more responsibility -- more authority -- jobs that require more technical ability -- not just jobs that pay more money to buy more things -- that old Anglo trap -- But a better position for ourselves in our communities, in Tribal and American society -- then our schools must recognize the abilities and talent in our children apart from the sexual form the body takes that carries that talent around.

This recognition must come EARLY in the child's schooling so that the school does not channel the female child toward some menial job before that child has had a chance to develop her capabilities.

This recognition must come without mass testing, or mass screening. I myself, am evidence that tests can, and do, lie.

The only way to insure that the child will be given a fair chance is to project a limitless future for all of our children, and then see to it that they get the tools they need to take hold of the future with confidence.

The problems within the field of education are only part of the answer. Even if our schools were perfect, and turned out brilliant women by the hundreds every June, our problem would not be solved.

There are blocks to our progress that must be torn down. One of the first blocks is the way we look at, and judge one another. We must trust that our sister knows her own way, and we must not judge her as she walks toward her own goal.

Other women can be very cruel to a successful young (or older) woman. It is one thing to face judgment from men, who believe that women cannot do the things they have been doing (not always very well) for many years. But when one hears the same tune from her sisters -- who have much to gain from each advance made by any woman -- then one's purpose

FALTERS, AND THE GAINS ARE NOT AS GREAT AS THEY MIGHT BE.

ONE OF OUR FIRST CONCERNS MUST BE TO MOTHER ONE ANOTHER. TO GIVE SUPPORT TO EACH SISTER WHEREVER SHE MAY BE -- YOUR DAUGHTER, YOUR FRIEND, YOUR MOTHERS, YOUR AUNTS, YOUR NEIGHBOR -- WHENEVER SHE NEEDS IT. TO SUPPORT HER EMOTIONALLY WHEN SHE IS DOWN, AND TO HELP HER WHEN SHE IS PHYSICALLY AT THE END OF HER ROPE.

AS WE HELP ONE ANOTHER WE MUST HELP MEN TO HELP US. TO LET THEM KNOW THAT WE CAN'T DO ALL OF THESE THINGS BY OURSELVES, AND THAT THE LIVES OF OUR MEN AND BOYS WILL ALSO BE MORE RICH -- MORE FULL -- AS WE ARE ALLOWED FULL PARTICIPATION IN THE WORLD.

THERE ARE TO BE SPECIAL HOME ECONOMICS CLASSES FOR BOYS. HERE OUR YOUNG MEN WILL LEARN HOW TO COOK FOR THEMSELVES. THEY SHOULD ALSO LEARN HOW TO WASH CLOTHES AND KEEP HOUSE. THEN, WHEN THEY ARE OUT ON THEIR OWN, THEY WILL NOT FEEL SO HELPLESS THAT THEY MUST FIND THE FIRST GIRL THAT COMES ALONG TO KEEP HOUSE FOR THEM AND FEED THEM. WE ARE ALL FAMILIAR WITH THE NEEDS THAT TRAP MANY YOUNG COUPLES INTO LOW PAYING, UNREWARDING JOBS EARLY IN THEIR ADULT LIVES.

THE HIGH SCHOOL INDUSTRIAL ARTS PROGRAMS ARE TO BE OPEN TO HIGH SCHOOL GIRLS.

SOON THERE WILL BE A COEDUCATIONAL CLASS IN THE CARE OF INFANTS AND YOUNG CHILDREN.

THE TRUTH IS, OUR SCHOOLS MUST PREPARE BOTH BOYS AND GIRLS TO BECOME FULL AND INDEPENDENT PERSONALITIES AND PERSONS. THEN, WHEN OUR YOUNG PEOPLE COME TOGETHER IT WILL BE AS TWO COMPLETE HUMAN BEINGS -- NOT ONE HELPLESS TO TAKE CARE OF HIMSELF, AND THE OTHER TOO TIMID AND TOO AFRAID TO FACE THE WORLD BY HERSELF.

THAT IS THE IDEAL WE ARE WORKING TOWARD. BUT TODAY BABIES ARE BEING BORN TO YOUNG COUPLES THAT ARE NOT PREPARED TO CARE FOR THEM, AND INTO A WORLD THAT IS FAR FROM IDEAL. AS LONG AS BABIES ARE BORN, IT WILL BE WE WHO CARRY THEM. AND AS LONG AS WE CARRY THEM WE CARRY TWO JOBS. WE MUST DO THEM WELL.

REALISTICALLY SPEAKING, IF YOUNG MOTHERS ARE TO CONTINUE THEIR EDUCATION, AND AS LONG AS THERE ARE MOTHERS WHO HAVE TO WORK, WE MUST HAVE DAY CARE CENTERS SO THE CHILDREN WHO ARE ALREADY HERE DO NOT STAND IN THE WAY OF THE MOTHERS' ACHIEVEMENTS.

BUT DAY CARE CENTERS CAN BE A TRAP. IF WE DO NOT CREATE DAY CARE CENTERS THAT REFLECT OUR OWN VALUES AS NAVAJO, APACHE, HOPI OR PAPAGO, THESE CHILDREN WILL GROW UP WITH A "MASS-ROOT" -- WITHOUT THE INDIVIDUAL ROOTS AND FAMILY WAY OF LIFE THAT GIVE OUR CHILDERN THE IDENTITY AND SELF AWARENESS THAT COMES FROM BEING A PART OF A UNIQUE CULTURE WITH UNIQUE THINGS TO OFFER THE WORLD.

SO WE MUST BE CAREFUL ABOUT DAY CARE CENTERS. WE MUST CREATE AND CHOOSE THEM WITH GREAT CARE -- BEFORE WE TRUST OUR CHILDREN TO THEM. IF NO SUITABLE DAY CARE FACILITIES EXIST NEARBY, THEN OUR YOUNG MOTHERS WOULD BE WISE TO DELAY -- TO POSTPONE BUT NOT ABANDON -- SOME OF THEIR AMBITIONS UNTIL THEIR CHILDREN ARE OLD ENOUGH TO BE PROCESSED THROUGH THE EDUCATION SYSTEM AS IT EXISTS.

IN THE REARING OF OUR INFANTS, AND IN THE EDUCATION OF OUR WOMEN, WE NEED ALL THE HELP WE CAN GET. AND MOST OF THE HELP MUST COME FROM EACH OTHER. THERE IS NO ROOM FOR DESTRUCTIVE GOSSIP AND BACKBITING, BECAUSE WE ARE ALL IN THIS TOGETHER. TOGETHER WE CAN CHANGE THE WORLD. ALONE WE WILL DISINTEGRATE INTO THE WORST ASPECTS OF THE WORLD WE WISH TO CHANGE.

AS AMERICAN INDIAN WOMEN, WE HAVE MUCH TO OFFER WIDER SOCIETY. THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE INDIAN CULTURE AND THE WHITE MAN'S CULTURE HAS BEEN DESCRIBED IN "CULTURAL INTEGRITY AND AMERICAN INDIAN EDUCATION", RICHARD M. ROSS, 11 ARIZONA LAW REVIEW:

> ON THE ONE HAND WAS THE INDIAN WITH HIS INTENSE GENEROSITY AND AVERSION TO ACQUISITIVENESS DISDAIN AND FEAR OF ECONOMIC COMPETITION; ARISTOCRATIC BENEVOLENCE AND ALTRUISM; COMMUNALITY OF MATERIAL POSSESSIONS; POLITICAL REPRESENTATION AND RESPONSE TO AGGRESSION; FIERCE INDEPENDENCE AND SELF RELIANCE IN YOUTH; AND ABSOLUTE ACCEPTANCE OF COMMUNITY PRAISE AND DISFAVOR. THIS CAN BE CONTRASTED WITH THE FAMILIAR VALUE SYSTEM OF AMERICAN SOCIETY; EMPHASIS ON ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL ACHIEVEMENT; WORK AND ACTIVITY AS GOODS IN THEMSELVES; EFFICIENCY AND PROGRESS AT THE EXPENSE OF PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS. SUPREMACY OF MATERIAL COMFORT; AND PRESSURE TOWARD INDIVIDUAL CONFORMITY".

IF SEVERAL HUNDRED INDIAN WOMEN ENTERED THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM EACH YEAR WITHOUT LOSING THOSE CULTURAL QUALITIES

THAT MAKE HER HUMAN, THEY COULD BEGIN TO TRANSFORM THAT SOCIETY WHICH DESPERATELY NEEDS CHANGING.

ONE OF THETHINGS THAT ANTHROPOLOGISTS NOTICE AND ALWAYS MENTION IS THAT WHEN A NAVAJO ENTERS WHITE SOCIETY, OR GOES TO LIVE IN A LARGE CITY, HE BEGINS TO FEEL ALIENATED, DEPRESSED, ANXIOUS, AND TO LOSE HIS IDENTITY. THEN THE ANTHROPOLOGIST SAYS THE NAVAJO GOES HOME TO BE PUT BACK ON HIS WAY THROUGH A SING OR OTHER MEANS.

WHAT THE ANTHROPOLOGIST DOESN'T SAY, IS THAT MANY PEOPLE IN THE WHITE SOCIETY ARE DEPRESSED, ANXIOUS, ALIENATED, AND HAVE LOST THEIR IDENTITY. IT IS A BY-PRODUCT OF WHITE SOCIETY. THESE PEOPLE CAN'T GO HOME. THEY ARE HOME. THERE IS SOMETHING NOT HUMAN ABOUT THE WIDER SOCIETY AS IT IS STRUCTURED TODAY. MAYBE TOGETHER WE CAN MAKE IT MORE HUMAN.

THAT IS ANOTHER PROBLEM THAT FACES US. HOW DEEP DO WE WANT TO ENTER A SOCIETY THAT IS CALLED "SICK" BY ITS OWN WISEST DOCTORS? IT IS A QUESTION THAT CAN BE ANSWERED ONLY BY EACH WOMAN HERE, AND BY HER OWN DEEPEST FEELINGS. AGAIN, WE MUST BE CAREFUL NOT TO JUDGE ANOTHER SISTER'S DECISION, BUT TO HELP HER DO WHAT SHE HERSELF FEELS SHE MUST DO, OR WANTS TO DO, AND TO BE THERE TO DEFEND AND SUPPORT HER WHEN SHE RETREATS, OR TO APPLAUD WITH HONEST JOY WHEN SHE MAKES HER GOAL.

WHAT POWER DO WE HAVE TO CHANGE OUR LIVES? THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT REPORT ON MINORITY FEMALE YOUTH SAYS THAT THE AMERICAN INDIAN EQUATES POWER WITH LAND OWNERSHIP. IS THIS TRUE ALWAYS? WHAT ABOUT THE POWER THAT COMES FROM EDUCATION AND SUCCESS IN EMPLOYMENT? WE MAY LIVE IN ISOLATED AREAS, BUT HERE JUST AS IT IS IN WIDER SOCIETY -- MONEY TALKS. MONEY CAN BUY MANY OF THE THINGS WE NEED -- THE NICE THINGS WE JUST WERE TALKING ABOUT.

WHO HAS THAT POWER THAT SPREADS THE MONEY AROUND? WHO DECIDES WHERE IT IS TO GO? WHAT IS THAT POWER? WHO HAS IT? WHERE CAN WE GET IT? HOW CAN WE USE THAT POWER WISELY, SO THAT WE DO NOT MAKE THE SAME MISTAKES THAT HAVE BEEN MADE IN THE PAST?

IN OUR UNIQUE SITUATION AS INDIAN WOMEN WE FACE THE IMMEDIATE PROBLEM OF POLITICAL POWER. TO A CERTAIN EXTENT WE HAVE MADE GAINS IN THE AMOUNT OF POWER WE AS WOMEN HAVE IN THE FIELD OF EDUCATION AND THE POWER TO AFFECT THE WAY A COMMUNITY THINKS. BUT THE WHOLE POLITICAL ARENA IS EMPTY OF OUR ORGANIZATION AND IS WAITING FOR US TO ENTER IT. THE GREATEST PROBLEM THAT FACES US TODAY IS HOW CAN WE ORGANIZE OURSELVES AS A POLITICAL FORCE SO THAT WE, AS A GROUP, HAVE THE RIGHT TO DEMAND OUR RIGHTFUL POSITION IN TRIBAL AND GOVERNMENT PROGRAMS. UNTIL WE ORGANIZE FOR POLITICAL ACTION, ONE MAJOR RIVER OF WEALTH AND POSITION IS CLOSED TO US. WE MUST ORGANIZE SO THAT WE CAN FORCE THE ESTABLISHED PEOPLE TO LISTEN TO OUR IDEAS, OUR SOLUTIONS, AND OUR HOPES.

THERE IS NOTHING RADICAL OR FRIGHTENING ABOUT THIS LIST OF THINGS THAT WE WANT AND NEED. WE HAVE NO REASON TO BE ASHAMED OF WANTING THEM AND NO REASON TO BE TIMID ABOUT FIGHTING FOR THEM POLITICALLY.

BUT TO BE EFFECTIVE POLITICAL FIGHTERS, WE HAVE TO UNDERSTAND HOW THE SYSTEM WORKS. WE MUST HAVE ENOUGH CONFIDENCE IN OURSELVES AND IN OUR DESIRES THAT WE CAN STAND UP TO THOSE WHO QUESTION THEM. WE MUST STOP BEING ASHAMED OF A HISTORY OF BEING POOR, AND START BEING ASHAMED OF BEING SO POOR IN SPIRIT THAT WE HAVE NOT FORCED SOME OF THESE THINGS TO COME TRUE SOONER.

WE MUST STUDY THE LEGISLATION THAT HAS ALREADY BEEN PASSED, AND WE MUST FORCE IT TO OPERATE FOR OUR BENEFIT. UNLESS WE KNOW WHAT BILLS HAVE PASSED, AND HOW THEY WORK, WE CAN'T ENFORCE THEM.

OF EVERY GOVERNMENT BILL, WE NEED TO KNOW: DOES IT RELATE TO ME, WHAT IS ITS PURPOSE, WHO IS AFFECTED BY IT, WHO SPONSORED IT, WHAT ARE THE AMENDMENTS, ALTERNATIVES AND EXCEPTIONS.

AS MEMBERS OF COMMUNITIES, WE HAVE TO KNOW WHERE TO REGISTER TO VOTE. WE HAVE TO BE ABLE TO DELIVER A PRECINCT ON ELECTION DAY. WE HAVE TO BE ABLE TO SEND MASSES OF LETTERS ON DEMAND TO OUR REPRESENTATIVES -- TRIBAL, STATE AND FEDERAL. WE HAVE TO KNOW ENOUGH ABOUT THE WORKING OF GOVERNMENT AND GOVERNMENTAL AGENCIES, TO SUPPORT ONLY THOSE CANDIDATES WHO LISTEN TO US AND ACT FOR US. THEN WE MUST VOTE SOLIDLY, AS THOUGHTFUL WOMEN ONLY FOR THOSE PEOPLE WHO WE KNOW WILL BENEFIT OUR POSITION.

THROUGH LEGAL AND POLITICAL POWER WE CAN IMPROVE OUR POSITION AND OUR OPPORTUNITIES IN EDUCATION AND ELSEWHERE. BUT WE STILL FACE DISCRIMINATION BY TRIBAL, COMMUNITY AND

GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS WHO -- WHEN FACED WITH AN INTELLIGENT WOMAN WITH A BACKGROUND FOR A RESPONSIBLE POSITION IN AUTHORITY, WILL NOT ALLOW THE WOMAN TO DO WHAT SHE HAS BEEN PREPARED TO DO.

OFTEN THE COMMUNITY IN WHICH THE WOMAN LIVES WILL NOT ALLOW HER TO FUNCTION IN A LEADERSHIP POSITION.

THE NAVAJO STORY OF THE SEPARATION HAS BEEN TAKEN BY MANY PEOPLE TO MEAN THAT WOMEN WILL NEVER BE IN A LEADERSHIP POSITION. I THINK WE ARE STILL ACTING OUT THE SEPARATION -- OR ELSE WE HAVE BEEN SEPARATED A SECOND TIME. IF WE WERE TRULY WORKING TOGETHER WITH MEN, IT WOULD NOT BE NECESSARY FOR US TO BE HERE TODAY.

THERE IS STILL A WIDE RIVER BETWEEN MEN AND WOMEN THAT DIVIDES THEM AND KEEPS THEM FROM COMPLETE PERSONHOOD. THE RIVER KEEPS THEM FROM WORKING TOGETHER.

THAT RIVER IS OUR CURRENT CULTURE -- THE WAY WE ACTUALLY LIVE TODAY. THE SAD PICTURE THAT I PAINTED EARLIER -- THE EMPTY LIVES OF MANY OF OUR YOUNG GIRLS -- IS MADE UP OF PATTERNS OF DAILY LIFE THAT ARE NOT ALL OUR OWN. MANY OF THE PATTERNS COME FROM THE SPANISH MACHISMO CULTURE, AND SOME FROM THE WHITE VICTORIAN AMERICAN SOLDIER THAT ARRIVED HERE JUST AS THE WORLD'S INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION BEGAN TO TOUCH OUR LIVES FOR THE FIRST TIME.

MANY OF THE PATTERNS WE FOLLOW DAILY IN OUR LIVES ARE NOT OURS.

OUR CULTURE SEPARATES US AND RESTRICTS OUR ACTIONS. NOT OUR TRADITION. IN OUR TRADITION ARE STRONG, EFFECTIVE WOMEN. SPIDER WOMAN IS STRONG. FIRST WOMAN HAS GREAT POWERS. MANY OF THE WOMEN IN OUR TRADITION AND IN OUR HISTORY ARE POWERFUL AND VITAL PERSONS.

BY TRADITION WOMEN OWN THE LAND, THE HERDS. THEY HAVE BREAT POWER WITHIN THE FAMILY AND THE CLAN.

OUR TRADITION CAN LIBERATE US FROM OUR RESTRICTIVE CULTURE.

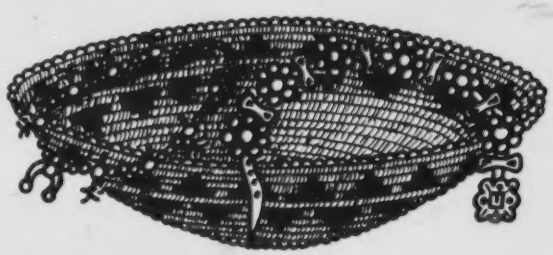
WE MUST SEARCH OUR LIVES AND GET BACK TO OUR ROOTS. WE MUST REGAIN THE PLACE AND THE RESPECT THAT WAS ONCE OURS. THAT PLACE AND RESPECT THAT OTHER CULTURES TOOK AWAY FROM US.

WHEN THE FIRST SEPARATION WAS FINISHED, MEN AND WOMEN LIVED IN HARMONY. LET US RECOGNIZE THIS NEW SEPARATION FOR WHAT IT IS. LET US BE FINISHED WITH THIS NEW SEPARATION. LET US CROSS THE RIVER OF BORROWED CULTURE PATTERNS. LET US GET BACK TOGETHER AS SOON AS WE CAN AS COMPLETE PEOPLE WHO LIVE TOGETHER IN HARMONY AND COOPERATION IN A NEW WAY THAT WILL BE HAPPIER FOR US ALL.

THANK YOU.

SOUTHWEST INDIAN WOMEN'S CONFERENCE

NAVAJO CIVIC CENTER
WINDOW ROCK, ARIZONA.
SEPTEMBER 24-25, 1975.



INTRODUCTION: EMPLOYMENT STATUS OF INDIAN WOMEN

Let me begin by laying something on you about the employment situation with Native American women, historically.

You remember the Lewis & Clark expedition of course, and you remember that Sacajawea guided it. But what few of us do realize is that while her husband got paid $500.00 for his part in it, Sacajawea got nothing--except a baby which she bore while on her long journey.

I'm going to talk with you about what I see are major problem areas in employment practices that women face and what needs to be done about them. Then I'm going to introduce you to a newly formed organization which is going to work for the changes needed.

One major problem in gathering minority data from the state of Arizona is its own agencies' apparent disinterest in providing such information. I consider this inexcusable for whatever reasons the state may come up with. Whatever data they have supplied me with is inconclusive and conflicting. They, themselves readily admit that their error rate is as high as 18%. For example, two state agencies with the responsibility of compiling data give conflicting figures for the total American Indian work force in the State. One agency reports we are 5.4% of the total work force available, another reports we are 1.8%. Of those figures, approximately 1.2% are in state employment. Again, an approximate less than .3% are Indian women. There is definitely a lack of standardization in their reporting and I submit it is the result of overt opposition to the stated affirmative action policy of the Governor.

In contrast, the data available on minority employment from the City of Phoenix is much more accurate although the employment picture of where we women are located in departments and at what grade levels is comparable to the state. We, ladies, are concentrated in the lowest grades, mostly clerical and service workers and I'm sure its no surprise to you. In fact, nearly 3/4 of the women who work for the City of Phoenix are clerical.

The city reports American Indians are 1.9% of the total population; of that, 1.2% are employed by the city and American Indian women are .8% of that figure. Now, although the data we have been supplied with may not look too bad on the surface and depending upon where you're coming from, it is a fact that American Indians are underutilized and underemployed at the state level and in the City of Phoenix. Above and beyond that, data supplied clearly shows that departmentally, in many agencies, there are no Indians employed and affirmative action cannot even be enforced because there is no program to implement the policy. In view of these findings, we must begin to affect change in our employment situation. We need to find women who are not afraid to tackle the problems in employment facing us and we must begin with women who are in positions to do so. Yes, we should be fearful of reprisals and intimidation but there is strength in numbers.

What can be done?

We need to develop a systematic approach to accumulating data on women. And let us not forget that our minority sisters are beginning to recognize this need also. We can work together. We must become our own advocates, our own self-help group. Few, if any, men will do it for us. And don't make the mistake of accepting an affirmative action policy for a program. A stated policy up to this point hasn't required that it be programmed into personnel policies and procedures.

My recommendations to you include, but are not limited to the following problem areas. If you work in personnel departments, with EEOC or Affirmative Action or have anything to do with employment, please consider how you too, can work for change.

In the area of Job Classification and Pay Systems all indications point to women being confined to certain jobs like clerical, librarians, teachers, nurses, paraprofessionals with the number of available workers kept artificially high by not allowing us into other jobs, thus stimulating artificial competition and allowing the employer to offer less. We suspect this is especially true of clerical workers at higher grade levels. Many secretaries in fact perform the functions of office manager or administrative assistant while being paid a secretary's salary, and many don't bitch because they had to scramble, maneuver or fight to get their jobs. According to one women's employment specialist "The traditionally much higher un-employment rates for women corroborate the poor employment possibilities for females". Men, for example, are still getting supervisory positions even in women's field.

A job classification system is basic to a merit system. It describes the nature of work, basic prerequisites, relationship between a job and others and allows for testing to test eligibility for a class. The rate of pay is based on class with levels or grades determined by specific training required, the complexity of the task, union bargaining agreements, work conditions or the "going rate" with the law of supply and demand ruling.

What is needed is a change in individual job specifications so that women have an opportunity to apply for jobs which heretofore excluded women, i.e., police and administration. Women can make recommendations that such things by interim goals, annually reviewed. Here again your knowledge and awareness of your needs can assist an affirmative action officer in identifying problem areas that need to be addressed. If an a.a.o. is a make, it is more imperative that you do become vocalif only for the reason that men claim they don't "understand" women. Again, don't get confused by goal setting for departments. For example, if a department has a goal of hiring 40% women (incidentally according to DOL 40% of the national work force is female; in Phoenix it is 43%) and the goal is exceeded by 5% take care to review where those women are in the department. They may all be clerical or service workers. That is not affirmative action or career development. Also, be careful that the men supplying you with this information don't confuse you by stating that an agency, organization, government, whatever is reaching its affirmative action goals overall. Remember, individual departments may be far short of the goals and they must be encouraged and prodded to be held accountable for implementation. In the area of Pay, women need to be aware of their rights to equal pay. You will notice I lay the burden upon us to respond. I have personally been guilty of saying that the

work I was doing gave me so much satisfaction and that I was contributing such a public service that maybe I could ignore the fact that I was deplorably underemployed. But that is nonsense. How many of you can say that you are being paid the same salary as your male counterparts in similar or comparable job classifications? Here again, we need to look more closely at the resources available to us for gaining equality in employment such as the Equal Pay Act, a vital resource, generally untapped.

Analysis need to be made of pay ranges for comparable jobs that men and women perform in different departments of an organization. One area deserving concentrated attention is that of clerical workers. Diane Crosby formerly with the personnel department of the City of Phoenix (and to whom I am deeply indebted for much of the though provoking ideas I'm presenting you with) did an analysis of clerical and service categories in the city and found that even at the unskilled level, men were starting at pay ranges twice that of women (1A vs. 3A).

We need to examine employment <u>patterns</u>. We need to analyze discrimatory practices in hiring, promoting, transferring, assignment and pay. For example, we need to eliminate unnecessary job requirements for positions traditionally filled by men such as the practice of demanding experience for apprenticeship jobs. We need an examination of criteria and hiring standards which may not measure accurately or predict job performance requirements. We need testing reform and positive recruitment of women.

We need to impress policy and decision-makers with the importance seniority can play in promotions, layoffs and other fringe benefits. Were a seniority system is practiced, it can operate to the disadvantage of women and minorities who have been hired most recently and often in response to an affirmative action policy.

Veterans preference in hiring may be a touch subject for some of us but for those of us whose husbands, brothers, and fathers are discriminated against also, its a moot point and actually gets them no additional points. Lobbying Congress at the national level is needed for this if the conference decides it is a major employment issue, since Congress authorized Veterans preference. I submit a better alternative to Vets. preference is the full certification list which permits selection of <u>any</u> qualified person on a list.

Another area that needs to be addressed is how to influence at the top policy and decision-making levels. We can do that by getting our advocates (women) on Boards and Commissions at all levels. These positions are generally appointive and made by elected officials. Examples of them are: Commissions on Women, Civil rights Advisory Boards, Human Relations Commissions and Boards of Directors.

Some other problem areas that need to be addressed and that I don't have time for, are: age discrimination, pregnancy leave, child care facilities for employees, myths about Indians, family status, ERA, volunteerism, use of unemployment figures and the right to file a complaint of discrimination.

Yes, we are faced with a huge task and a group of women in Phoenix has decided to undertake it. We are few and we will have hassles, not the least being organizational. But we are beginning. We haven't even agreed upon a name for ourselves. Temporarily we call ourselves Women for Equal Opportunity. Our overall goal is to fight employment discrimination against women of all races.

The group is going to make a special effort to reach minority women since many groups in the past have not. The goals are very specific and grew out of the personal experience of those initiating the group. Some of the already identified goals are:

1. To gather data to show the women's employment picture locally. Develop a data bank including resources for presentation to other groups, i.e. slides, speakers, charts, graphs, etc.

2. To provide a Network of Resources to support those women who have filed complaints of suits, including:

   a. Sources of legal help
   b. Advice on where to get help and what happens when you file an EEOC claim or law suit.
   c. Help in seeking other employment, etc.
   d. Referral for appropriate counseling.
   e. How to document your case and be your own advocate.

If you would like to know more about us and what we have to offer please feel free to talk with me anytime during this conference. I don't have all the answers but I can proudly say that among us, our resources are extensive.

Miss Trudy Multine
Special Assistant to
City Mayor
City of Phoenix
Phoenix, Arizona 85000

PHOENIX INDIAN WOMEN

Interest in issues related to women has been the stimulus for several meetings of a group of Indian women who live in the Metropolitan Phoenix area.

Violence as an issue was prime during the Joann Little defense era. Some Indian women were asked to consider how violence affected them and they began to identify ways which related. It became apparent that there were many aspects to this problem, and that Indian women were definitely affected. In order to highlight this problem, a dramatization in the form of [illegible] was written and presented for the general public.

Annoucement of the Southwest Indian Women's Conference was made at an opportune time for this group. Three meetings were called to discuss the proposed issues and plan for participation in the conference. A number of women expressed interest in attending.

A number of issues were discussed, however, the focus was finally placed on the special needs of Indian women in crisis, especially in urban living. This included women who have been subjected to violence, women suddenly alone through divorce or death, and new unmarried mothers. It was determined that a shelter where women could receive crisis counseling would be a solution. Since one of the topics for discussion was funding sources the decision was made to direct our presentation towards funding.

The title, WOMEN WITH A DRUM was chosen to provide uniqueness as well as to symbolize women speaking out for their needs.

Participants included:

Phyllis Bigpond	Carole Garcia
Mavis Mitchell	Diane Porter
Pat Johnston	Karla Miller
Gloria Gracia	Cynthia Cardona
Kay Drew	Becky Beane
LaVonne Three Stars	Gloria Kupsick
Trudy Multine	Phyllis Antone
Peggy Morago	Vickie Nez
Katie Botone	Charlotte Goodluck
Christina Hendericks	Reva Crawford
Gloria Sinquah	Rachel Bojorquez
Jan Barehand	

A COUNSELING CENTER FOR WOMEN

The intent of this paper is to focus attention on some special needs of Indian women which have been identified by a group of Indian women in the Phoenix area.

The role of Indian women has been prescribed by tradition, tribal custom, attitudes, and societal conditioning. Traditionally, their role in tribal family hierarchies has been important and they have been treated accordingly. As society changes, and lifestyles of Indian people are affected by these changes, so have the roles of Indian women been affected. While a significant number assume roles of leadership and influence both inside and outside the home and are a prime force in promoting family stability; we submit to you that a significant number are no longer treated with comparative respect. Urban living seems especially to have been a contributing factor and taken its toll on Indian women.

The first problem area which is being addressed is that many Indian women are frequently subjected to physical abuse from men and have little acceptable recourse. Some of the reasons may be that: (1) Women have been conditioned to accept this behavior as a way of life and see no alternative for themselves, (2) these women have no knowledge of resource for support or treatment, or (3) resources are non-existent.

Numerous instances of physical abuse of Indian women by men have been verbally cited. Statistical data is not readily available because most of these women have learned to cope with these situations by taking no action. However, if one could document the instances when women fail to show up for work because they are ashamed of their appearance, e.g. black eyes, bruises, etc., or when they come to work in this condition but are unwilling to discuss the cause, doubtless the number would be great. This does not take into account those women, primarily homemakers, who have suffered this kind of abuse, but remain secluded.

Many Indian women have learned to accept abuse because they are unable to see any way out of their situation, particularly if there are children involved. This acceptance is reinforced by the attitudes of those around them. Beating up one's wife or girlfriend seems to be an acceptable behavior among some Indian men and others will not intervene. The abused person may be reluctant to seek outside help or may have no knowledge of available resources, if they exist. In reality, few resources exist which will effectively provide these services for Indian women. Some services are provided by agencies, such as the Phoenix Indian Center, Indian Health Service or other family service agencies, but these are not comprehensive in nature.

The second area of concern is focused on Indian women in crisis because they suddenly find themselves alone, frequently with responsibility for their children, and unprepared for independent living. This may occur through divorce, death, or unwed motherhood. Many of these women are unskilled for employment. The extended family, which may be the customary support for women in this situation, is usually non-existent in the metropolitan areas. The need for support through the crisis and assistance in finding new directions for their lives seems paramount.

Our proposal is for a counseling center in a residential setting which may provide temporary shelter for Indian women crisis. This facility would also make provision for child care as the need arose.

The objectives of such a program would be:

1. To develop a support system for Indian women in crisis with provision for a range of supportive services;

2. To provide an alternative to acceptance of physical abuse as a way of life;

3. To aid in developing self direction for Indian women who have not been prepared for independent living.

The services proposed are comprehensive in nature and include the following:

Primary Services: (Available within the Center)

1. Crisis intervention;

2. Counseling (May be individual or group);

3. Temporary shelter (May be for women and children);

4. Planning for child care.

Ancillary Services: These may be needed in individual situations, but perhaps better provided outside the Center and other resources will be fostered and utilized as necessary:

1. Medical care

2. Legal advice

3. Psychiatric or psychological services

4. Vocational guidance

5. Parent education

6. Day care

7. Family therapy

8. Family planning

9. Transportation

Identification of funding sources for the special needs of Indian women is our primary objective in this presentation. The planning process will be on-going within the community. Interest is high among many Indian women and the need has been established.

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SEP 16 1975

CONFERENCE OF SOUTHWEST INDIAN WOMEN BEING HELD SEPTEMBER 24 AND 25 AT WINDOW ROCK, ARIZONA, SPONSORED BY ANNIE WAUNEKA, NAVAJO, WHO IS A PRESIDENTIALLY APPOINTED MEMBER OF NATIONAL COMMISSION ON OBSERVANCE OF INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S YEAR.

I UNDERSTAND THAT AN INVITATION HAS BEEN OR WILL BE EXTENDED TO INDIAN WOMEN OF SOUTHWEST, POSSIBLY INCLUDING BIA EMPLOYEES.

IN CASE YOUR EMPLOYEES ARE INVITED, I URGE YOU TO COOPERATE IN PERMITTING THEIR ATTENDANCE IF AT ALL POSSIBLE. FOR EXAMPLE, NAVAJO AREA DIRECTOR HAS ISSUED INSTRUCTIONS TO ALL JURISDICTIONS IN HIS AREA TO ALLOW EMPLOYEES TO ATTEND CONFERENCE AND BE PROVIDED ADMINISTRATIVE LEAVE.

(Sgd) Morris Thompson

COMMISSIONER OF INDIAN AFFAIRS

EPickett:sed 9/16/75

cc:
606 Surname
100 Chrony
101 Chrony
BCCO
Mailroom
910 Summers
930 Broadt

The above message was dictated to 800-257-2211 at 3:50 p.m. on September 16, 1975, by Stella E. Delaware.

THE NAVAJO NATION

WINDOW ROCK, NAVAJO NATION (ARIZONA) 86515

PETER MACDONALD
CHAIRMAN, NAVAJO TRIBAL COUNCIL

WILSON C. SKEET
VICE CHAIRMAN, NAVAJO TRIBAL COUNCIL

Ya-Tah-Hey-Qua-A-Sini

(Hello Everyone)

It is indeed a pleasure to welcome all of you to the first Southwest Indian Women's Conference. This event is being sponsored in conjunction with other world-wide activities in support of the International Women's Year 1975.

In todays world, women's problems are significant and should be recognized as such. As Indian Women it is now time we begin to make our concerns known and voice our opinions loud enough for everyone to hear. There are numerous barriers to overcome, issues to be raised and discussed and solutions to be achieved.

I think our program begins to address some real concerns. We have a chance today and tomorrow to ask questions and seek out answers that will bring a greater harmony to all Women and new hopes for their future.

I hope these two days will be eventful ones and reinstill in each of us an even greater commitment towards achieving the rights and dignity of all Women.

Sincerely,

Dr. Annie D. Wauneka

Annie D. Wauneka, Member
National Commission On the Observation of
International Women's Year 1975 and the
Navajo Tribal Council Delegate

THE NAVAJO NATION

WINDOW ROCK, NAVAJO NATION (ARIZONA) 86515

PETER MACDONALD
CHAIRMAN, NAVAJO TRIBAL COUNCIL

WILSON C. SKEET
VICE CHAIRMAN, NAVAJO TRIBAL COUNCIL

September 22, 1975

MEMORANDUM

TO: ALL TRIBAL EMPLOYEES

FROM: Chairman, Navajo Tribal Council

SUBJECT: Observance of International Women's Year

In conjunction with the President's appointment of the National Commission on the Observance of International Women's Year, the week of July 21-25, 1975, was proclaimed by me as Women's Week in the Navajo Nation.

The Navajo Tribe recognizes the tremendous contributions to the health, education, welfare and economic situation of the Navajo people made by today's Navajo women. Also, the Navajo Tribe has, and will continue to support the great endeavors of Indian Women.

Since the Southwest Indian Women's Conference is the first conference of its type to be sponsored by women in the Navajo Nation, the Navajo Tribe is granting administrative leave to Tribal employees who wish to attend the conference on September 24 and 25, 1975.

Peter MacDonald

Distribution

THE NAVAJO NATION

WINDOW ROCK, ARIZONA [illegible]

PETER MacDONALD
Chairman, Navajo Tribal Council

WILSON C. SKEET
Vice Chairman, Navajo Tribal Council

September 11, 1975

Dear

This letter is a request for your participation in the Southwest Indian Women's Conference which is scheduled for September 24 & 25, 1975 at the Window Rock Navajo Civic Center, Window Rock, (Arizona) Navajo Nation. This conference is part of the International Women's Year Commission activities. This Commission has a Committee on Women with Special Problems, presently identified as the Aged Women, the racial groups as the Black, the Asian & the American Indians, and the young women (16 to 21 years).

This conference was initiated out of concern that is national issues concerning special interest groups were being discussed, than the conference should allow the input from those directly concerned as the special interest group members. We felt that the issues related to Indian Women should be reviewed where the Indian women lived, on an Indian Reservation. The conference is scheduled at the earliest possible date which will allow groups with special interest can have follow up on the conference. We are soliciating position papers from concerned individual Indian women are compiling resource materials for the conference.

Dr. Annie D. Wauneka

Dr. Annie D. Wauneka, Member
International Women's Year

FEDERALLY EMPLOYED WOMEN, INC.
An Organization for Opportunity and Equality for Women in Government
NATIONAL PRESS BUILDING, WASHINGTON, D.C. 20004

Founded in 1968

A PROCLAMATION

Federally Employed Women, Inc., is extremely happy and proud to salute the attendees at the first Southwest Indian Women's Conference. FEW was founded in Washington, D.C., in 1968 to improve the employment status of women in Federal employment, help eliminate sex discrimination, and strengthen the merit system.

We are all excited about Native American women from all parts of the United States coming together to discuss mutual interests and concerns. Many women have discovered a deep sense of sisterhood with other women from conversations and workshops like the ones you wil be sharing.

FEW wishes you much success in this, your first conference and stands by to assist you in any way possible. The addresses of our New Mexico and Arizona chapters are listed below. I hope you will write them or the National Office with your concerns.

Yours in sisterhood,

Janice Mendenhall
President

September 21, 1975

Zia Chapter
Pam Fraser, President
P. O. Box 1699
Albuquerque, NM 87103

Coronado Chapter
Thelma Darby, President
P. O. Box 735
Ft. Huachuca, AR 85613

THE NAVAJO NATION
WINDOW ROCK, NAVAJO NATION (ARIZONA) 86515

PETER MACDONALD
CHAIRMAN, NAVAJO TRIBAL COUNCIL

WILSON C. SKEET
VICE CHAIRMAN, NAVAJO TRIBAL COUNCIL

August 14, 1975

This letter is to request your assistance in making the Southwest Indian Women's Conference a success. The conference is part of the International Women's Year Commission activities. The Commission has a committee on Women with Special Problems which has identified the areas of concern as the aged women, the racial groups as the Black American, the Asian American and the American Indian and also the young women (16 to 21 years).

The Indian Women conference is initiated by Dr. Annie D. Wauneka, a member of the International Women's Year 1975. The conference was initiated due to a crucial concern that if the National issues will consider special needs of minority women, a conference must be held where the directly concerned women live, to assure full participation by women of concern.

The conference is scheduled at the earliest possible time to allow any follow-up on the conference by special interest groups. Navajo Nation is the site because the first group of planners are near this area and we were able to secure commitments to support the conference with workers and facilities. The National Committee is supporting this conference and will participate. The scheduled date is September 24 and 25 at the Navajo Civic Center in Window Rock, Arizona. Details of the conference will be out within the next three (3) weeks.

Our request of you are in two areas: 1) We request your assistance in recruiting potential active participants at the Conference; and 2) we request your assistance in providing position papers or to identify someone who can provide definitive position papers pertaining to problems for Indian Women:

The areas of concern are currently divided into three very broad areas:

1. Funding of Programs: the question evolves around what kinds of funds and monies are available for use by women; these could be grants for programs or individuals which benefits the Indian women directly.

2. Legal and legislative protection and support for women: the question evolves around what kinds of criminal and civil laws do or do not protect women in employment, education, community participation, home and other domestic matters.

3. Self-identity: the question evolves around how Indian women view themselves in light of their past Indian heritage, the current events and in light of the future requirements.

We want to identify knowledgeable Indian women who can provide general overview in the three areas and wish to have special position papers presented which will point out not only the problems but also recommendations for solving the problems.

Please let us know at the earliest possible time your interest and your plans for participation. The following persons are involved directly with the plans:

Ellouise DeGroat, ACSW
Chief, Mental Health Program
Navajo Area Indian Health Service
P.O. Box G
Window Rock, Arizona 86515

Laura Bennett
Federal Women's Representative
Navajo Area Indian Health Service
P.O. Box G
Window Rock, Arizona 86515

Mrs. Marie Allen
Chief, Health Education Branch
Navajo Area Indian Health Service
P.O. Box G
Window Rock, Arizona 86515

Dr. Annie D. Wauneka, Member
Navajo Tribal Council
P.O. Box 611
Ganado, Arizona 86505

Margie Thomas, Director
Indian Culture Curriculm
Public School
Tuba City, Arizona 86045

Ethel Lou Yazzie, Director
Rough Rock Demonstration School
Chinle, Arizona 86503

Nancy Evans, ACSW
Assistant Area Social Worker
Bureau of Indian Affairs
Navajo Area Office
Window Rock, Arizona 86515

Rosh Foley
Vocational Development Specialist
U.S. Public Health Service
PHS Indian Hospital
Winslow, Arizona 86047

Mrs. Adele Lope
Extention Home Economist
Bureau of Indian Affairs
Shiprock Agency
Shiprock, New Mexico 87420

Mrs. Louva Dahozy, Special Assistant
Emergency Foods & Medical Services
Office of Navajo Economic Opportunity
Fort Defiance, Arizona 86504

Ms. Eva Benally, Director
Navajo Community College
Shiprock Agency
Shiprock, New Mexico 87420

Sincerely Yours,

Dr. Annie D. Wauneka

Dr. Annie D. Wauneka, Member
International Women's Year

Ellouise DeGroat

Ellouise DeGroat, ACSW
Chief, Mental Health Program

Nancy Evans

Nancy Evans, ACSW
Assistant Area Social Worker